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# JESUS' IDEA

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# JESUS' IDEA

*A Study of the Real Jesus*

BY

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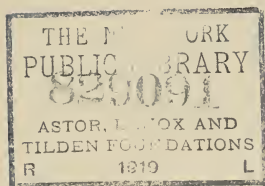
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THIS STUDY IS GRATEFULLY DEDICATED  
TO THREE NOBLE WOMEN:

THE MOTHER WHO GAVE ME LIFE; THE STEPMOTHER  
WHO FIRST TAUGHT ME TO LOVE AND ADMIRE JESUS OF  
NAZARETH; THE WIFE, MY FAITHFUL COMPANION AND  
HELPMET IN MAKING KNOWN JESUS AND HIS IDEA  
AMONG MEN.

"It is the people that make the nation great or vile in the sight of the universe. Shall you nourish them, then, on the garbage of ribald feebleness, or on the pure, strong meats of the mind? As you feed them, so will be their substance and sinew; as you nourish them, so will be the fruit that they bear."

OUIDA.

"But, after all, the power of any religion is to be found in its ideas and in the personality of its founder. Men will return to these as to a living fountain, which may have been choked for centuries with sand and drift-wood. Clearing away the rubbish they see again the living water. Drinking of it, they will rejoice all the more when the full river of the water of life—sufficient to satisfy the thirst of all lands—breaks upon their astonished vision."

G. M. GRANT.

"Man is either a free being, with an intelligent Deity as his counterpart, or else he and his fellows are a mere procession of marionettes, which strut, or jig, or laugh, or groan, or caper, according as their wires are pulled by forces admittedly less intelligent than themselves."

W. H. MALLOCK.

## PREFACE

THE attention of thoughtful minds is riveted to-day upon Jesus of Nazareth as never before. While the world at large, and even the Christian World, is witnessing an ever-increasing questioning and disregard of apparently outworn religious systems, both doctrinal and ecclesiastical, the minds and hearts of men are turning with ever-freshening interest and homage to the Galilean Peasant. One of the most singular and salient phenomena of the day, indeed, is the fearless challenge to which the Faith of Christendom and the Authority of the Christian Church is being subjected. Men are asking whether the accepted faith can be justified, and whether the church is representative or misrepresentative of Jesus. The question is usually charged with tremendous seriousness, and men are more and more seeking to understand the source of both faith and church. What is Jesus' real relationship to these? What is the idea back of these phenomena? Can Jesus be directly and intimately associated with them, or is the relationship unreal and far removed? Such are the questionings. Current religious literature witnesses abundantly to this fact. In consequence Jesus is finding many and able interpreters. What was Jesus Idea? then becomes a matter of paramount importance. Yet, so far as the writer knows, there have been but slight attempts to treat systematically and popularly of "Jesus' Idea." That this is an important subject few will deny. Many, indeed, are prepared to admit that it is the most important subject in connection with Christianity. The writer, sharing this feeling and attracted by the importance and interest of this subject, has sought in the following pages to disclose "Jesus' Idea" as it is expressed and embodied in the teaching and acts of the Master recorded in the Four Gospels. Further, the aim has been to present the Idea of Jesus and its development in such a way that even the casual and comparatively non-theological reader may understand. This purpose will explain the ample quotations from

the Bible, and the endeavor to compress much information within a small compass.<sup>1</sup>

Attempts of this character, unless the writer is grievously mistaken, are ever becoming more necessary in an age of analytical rather than synthetical criticism; in an age when men are being fed frequently upon the chaff of critical studies rather than upon the wheat of Christianity. In fact, amidst the intricate maze of interesting detail which now holds the attention of Biblical students and which inclines the mind even of the average person more easily to negation than to affirmation, men are likely to forget what essential Christianity is. A temporary paralysis has indeed already resulted to true Christian faith and practice. That Biblical Criticism should contribute to this result is due in part, we believe, to the fact that there has not been the careful, consistent, and persistent setting forth on the part of the Christian Church, of the basic truth of Christianity, as it is disclosed in *Jesus' Idea*. Emphasis is usually placed upon the subordinate details in the Christian View of God and of the World, and not upon the View itself. Had the emphasis been placed upon the View itself, so august, convincing, and self-sufficient is that View, that much of the evil which we deplore would have been avoided. Hence there is a great need of positive and definite teaching, for Christianity, as it is interpreted by *Jesus*, is its own best proof.

The writer, however, does not share the fear of many that substantial loss will ensue to Christianity as the result of the modern scientific spirit of inquiry, of Biblical Criticism, of the Study of Comparative Religion, and of the present general method of Historical Investigation. He looks for substantial gain, rather than loss. Yet there will be profound modification of earlier opinion about many subjects; especially marked will be the change produced in the conception of faith, and of the claims and nature of the Christian Church. This, indeed, is already noticeable in the life of our time. While the various denominations are endeavoring usually to hold fast to the old, sometimes opposing resolutely the new, and occasionally ex-

<sup>1</sup> The Biblical quotations are usually taken from the Authorized Version, in spite of its inaccuracies and inadequacy, because it is the version generally used by the majority of English-speaking Christians, however we may deplore the fact.



hibiting a decidedly reactionary tendency, there is everywhere a gradual but increasing undermining of the old. Thoughtful minds outside the Church, and thousands of nominal adherents of the Church, are ceasing to care greatly for denominational systems and doctrinal formularies. They do not war upon them, but treat them with studied indifference, easy-going tolerance, or sometimes with open contempt. They may remain within the lines of their former allegiance, but the spirit of their allegiance is changing. They are quietly emphasizing the commandments of God, while the traditions of men are lapsing into "innocuous desuetude." "Modernism," indeed, is everywhere apparent, and is steadily growing in influence. It is, in fact, becoming all-pervasive. One effect of this spirit, we believe, will be the fuller appreciation of Jesus and His Idea.

In endeavoring to ascertain "Jesus' Idea," use has been made of the Four Gospels. Christ Himself left no writings. We have simply reports of His words; indeed, speaking exactly, we have only translations of reports of His teaching. Jesus probably spoke in Aramaic, and not in Greek. St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke alike, for the most part, translate into Greek a report of what Christ said. Just how accurately they translated the report, and how accurately the first-hand report represented the teaching of Jesus are interesting questions. That they tell us truly what they believe Christ taught cannot be denied; the writings themselves bear the intrinsic stamp of truthfulness. Yet, after all, reports are often inaccurate, and translations of reports may sometimes be doubly misleading. This fact would seem to throw all of Christ's teaching into the realm of conjecture. This, however, is not to be believed. The trend and the essential substance of Jesus' teaching is evident enough from the substantial agreement of the various reporters; and from the clear-cut, definite impression which they convey—and the very nature of the teaching, too, precludes the possibility of invention. Hence, we have no difficulty in determining approximately what Jesus taught. In using the Fourth Gospel, the writer believes that he is using the production of one who may have known Jesus intimately, and that the author was probably St. John, the Apostle. If St. John was not the author of the Gospel, it is at least the production of one who had meditated long and intimately upon

the teaching of Jesus and had grown to appreciate its beauty and its power. Hence in this sense at least, this source is as authoritative for the teaching of Jesus as the Synoptic Gospels. The writer, indeed, displays a more marked spiritual insight than the Synoptists, and this seemingly guarantees a fairer and fuller appreciation of the mind of Christ. If he does not report the form of Jesus' teaching, he at least gives us insight into its content.

It is a significant fact of our day that the Gospels are only now coming into their own. This may seem very strange, but it is undeniably true. With the Reformation, the Bible may be said to have come into its own; especially the Pauline writings. Unfortunately, the exigency of the situation necessitated a certain obscuration of the Gospels and their message at that time. This, our age is happily ending, and the effect upon the life and the thought of the world will be, we believe, as marked and lasting ultimately as that of the earlier Reformation; for "Jesus' Idea" will be seen to be the very essence of Christianity, and this will compel a thorough-going readjustment along many lines—intellectual, ecclesiastical, social, industrial and economic.

In conclusion, the writer would acknowledge his great obligation to the two treasuries of scholarly opinion and research: Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible, and the Encyclopedia Biblica, and especially to the articles, "The Kingdom of God," by the late Dr. Orr; "Jesus Christ," by Dr. Sanday, and "The Sermon on the Mount," by Dr. Votaw, in the former work. "The Theology of the New Testament," by the late Professor Stevens, and "The Kingdom of God," by the late Professor Bruce, have also proven useful. While various authorities have been drawn upon in the course of the work, and no claim of originality is made, the writer trusts that he has made, at least, some contribution to a better understanding of the spirit and the aim of Jesus. The subject matter of the volume, in fact, was presented from time to time in extemporaneous sermons and addresses to a Christian congregation, where it found appreciative listeners. Because of this, the volume was written, and it is now presented to the public in the hope that it may prove useful and suggestive. The writer's hearty thanks are due to Miss Mary C. Haley, who kindly prepared the manuscript for the press.

FORDYCE HUBBARD ARGO.

The Rectory, Rockledge, Pa.

October 1, 1916.

# CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE KINGDOM OF GOD . . . . .	13
II. THE ORIGIN AND PRE-CHRISTIAN DEVELOPMENT OF THE IDEA . . . . .	25
III. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE IDEA . . . . .	39
IV. THE NIGHT OF LEGALISM . . . . .	47
V. JÉSUS' IDEA OF THE KINGDOM . . . . .	60
VI. THE SUBJECTS OF THE KINGDOM . . . . .	78
VII. THE KINGDOM'S METHOD OF DEVELOPMENT . . . . .	102
VIII. THE WORLD'S RECEPTION OF THE KINGDOM . . . . .	109
IX. THE VALUE OF THE KINGDOM . . . . .	125
X. THE ALLOY OF THE KINGDOM . . . . .	140
XI. THE EXTENT OF THE KINGDOM . . . . .	150
XII. THE TIME OF THE KINGDOM . . . . .	167
XIII. THE CHURCH AND THE KINGDOM . . . . .	181
XIV. THE KINGDOM AND THE SUPERNATURAL . . . . .	204
XV. THE VICEGERENT OF THE KINGDOM . . . . .	226
APPENDIX . . . . .	245



## JESUS' IDEA



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## CHAPTER I

### THE KINGDOM OF GOD

THE measure of a man's dissatisfaction with himself is the measure of the man. A nation's self-dissatisfaction is the prophecy of what it may become. Our aspirations and ambitions are, as a rule, indicative of our capabilities.

Viewing life as disinterestedly as one can, there is great difficulty in understanding the problem of the world and of human existence. There is so much darkness mingled with the light, falsehood with truth, sin with goodness, sorrow with happiness, that any rational solution of the problem seems unlikely, if not impossible.

One thing, however, attracts and rivets the attention:—Men, individually and collectively, are not satisfied, and have never been satisfied with themselves or their condition. There has been, to a greater or less extent, dissatisfaction with things as they are; it is this divine discontent, indeed, that has always turned the wheels of progress. Rightly does the poet sing:

“Progress, man's distinctive mark alone,  
Not God's, and not the beasts: God is, they are;  
Man partly is, and wholly hopes to be.”

“Progress is

The Law of Life: Man is not Man as yet.”

This dissatisfaction with himself affects, very noticeably, man's attitude toward the material and the intellectual world of his time; unfortunately, this spirit of discontent is not so manifest in the religious world. As to the former, there is

ever and always a restlessness indicative of great results. Men palpably think life "out of joint," and seek to remedy its ills by new triumphs over material resources; or they fancy that progress along intellectual lines, the dispelling of ignorance, the enlightening of the human mind, and the attendant results in better laws, better institutions, and a more righteous and equitable government, will prove the desired and needed remedy. Thus we achieve splendid and ever-increasing results along these lines, which are to-day, however, but weakly and poorly prophetic of those surpassing achievements which the future now conceals.

There are those, however, who, while they agree with their brethren in an ardent desire for better conditions, find that neither complete mastery over the material world, nor exhaustive triumphs in the intellectual realm, will prove the elixir of life. In their view, the wound of humanity lies deeper than matter or mind. Man, they declare, is more than body or matter, more than intellect or mind. Man is also spiritual and religious; character is his greatest endowment. And just here lies their dissatisfaction. Man is not, spiritually and religiously, what he ought to be. In the view of this class of malcontents, man is vitally affected in the spiritual part of his nature; therefore, the patent need of the world and of the individual, is *character*. "Give us," they say, "all possible material and intellectual progress; but above all, and crowning all, give us greater progress toward God!" A closer relationship to the Deity is demanded; new triumphs are craved here. And so, a boundless dream—albeit called by some, iridescent—haunts their thoughts: they have a vision of the Kingdom of God. A Kingdom of God they desire, in which God's law shall be understood and known of all men, and in which God's will shall prevail, and God's will, not the will of man, be done.

This was the vision of Jesus of Nazareth; just here Jesus had His starting point. He was the chief exponent of the Kingdom of God,—the leader of those who would remedy the individual and the social ills of the world by the redemption of man's moral nature. Speaking in a general way, those who seek the betterment of human conditions may be classified as materialistic reformers, intellectual reformers, and spiritual re-



formers; that is, in each instance, the reformer places the emphasis upon the material, or the intellectual, or the spiritual things of life. Usually men are controlled in their efforts at reform by one of these principles, often to the exclusion, or sad neglect, of the others. Hence, their efforts are unsuccessful, and often vapid and inane, because partial and divisive, in that they deal with man, not as man, but as body, or intellect, or spirit. Man is, however, a living soul, and the strength of Christianity, so far as man is concerned, lies in the fact that Jesus Christ in His attempt at reform, took into account man's three-fold nature—body, mind, and spirit—and made adequate provision therefor. While the foundation of His reformation lay in the redemption of man's moral nature, Jesus was in no way deaf to the appeal either of the body or the mind, as His numerous miracles, and His strenuous endeavors to instruct, amply attest. His vision, as we have said, was of the Kingdom of God; a Kingdom large enough to include all the needs of man while based upon man's moral needs.<sup>1</sup>

The unique position held by Jesus of Nazareth in the history of the world for well-nigh two thousand years, is admitted by all; nor is it going beyond the bounds of truth to say that, great as has been the homage paid to the Carpenter of Nazareth in the past, greater is the reverence felt toward Him in the present; and more intelligent and enduring is the homage paid, because it is founded upon a more just appreciation of His worth as a man, and not merely upon an easy and unquestioning acceptance of Him as the supernatural Son of God.

<sup>1</sup> The reader of the Synoptic Gospels does not proceed far before he is convinced that Jesus' remedy for the ills of the world was "the Kingdom of God." He may be at a loss to know just what Jesus meant by the expression—"Kingdom of God"—which was so often upon His lips; but he is fully aware that Jesus laid great stress upon the importance of the Kingdom to the world. For example, he is at once confronted by so remarkable an announcement as this: "*Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you*" (Matthew 6:33). This absolute direction is given to mankind by Jesus without any qualification whatsoever. If one reads further, he finds Jesus always placing great emphasis upon the Kingdom; an emphasis which soon warrants the belief that, in the view of the Master, the great need of the world and of man is the Kingdom of God. However, more of this anon. See Appendix A, "The Theme of Jesus' Preaching."

Remarkable testimony to the innate grandeur of the Christ can be adduced from many sources: orthodoxy and heterodoxy, believer and unbeliever, radical and conservative, Jew and Christian alike, unite in chanting the praises and acknowledging the unique greatness of Him who is, more and more, being crowned King of Men. Mr. Lecky, in his "History of European Morals," does not pay too high encomium to the Founder of Christianity, when he remarks: "It was reserved for Christianity to present to the world an ideal character, which, through all the changes of eighteen centuries has filled the hearts of men with an impassioned love and has shown itself capable of acting on all ages, nations, temperaments, conditions; has not only been the highest pattern of virtue, but the highest incentive to its practice." The testimony of a noted Rabbi also is no less emphatic in praise of Jesus than the customary Christian eulogy. Delivering an address before the Epworth League of St. James' Methodist Church, Chicago, Dr. Emil G. Hirsch declared: "If Jesus Christ should return to the earth to-morrow, He would be welcomed in every Jewish synagogue in the land, and every Jew would say with David, 'Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in.'" While this very cordial welcome may well be doubted in view of the singularly inhospitable reception extended centuries ago, the purport of the declaration is evident, in that it voices the admiration felt by many Jews for the Christ life and the Christ character.

Nor can we forbear to quote here the very eloquent tribute of Monsieur Renan, in the closing paragraph of his *Vie de Jesus*: "As for us, eternal children, condemned to weakness, we who labor without harvesting, and shall never see the fruit of what we have sown, let us bow before these demi-gods. They knew what we do not know: to create, to affirm, to act. Shall originality be born anew, or shall the world henceforth be content to follow the paths opened by the bold creators of the ancient ages? We know not. But whatever may be the surprises of the future, Jesus will never be surpassed. His worship will grow young without ceasing; His legend will call forth tears without end; His sufferings will melt the noblest hearts; all ages will proclaim that among the sons of men there is none born greater than Jesus."

Similar testimony, from most dissimilar sources, might be multiplied at will; but, not to weary the reader, we will pass to the point in view: The growing conviction of our age that the truest and best appreciation of Jesus of Nazareth is gained along the line of a study of the Man Himself, and His teachings and acts; and not primarily from a study of what others have taught about Him. "He stood the more a King when bared to man." His message to the world, indeed, is best heard from His own lips; and His ideas are best gained by a close study of His own words as we find them reported by his faithful followers. We cannot but feel that the world has suffered an immeasurable loss, in that the teaching of the Master has been somewhat obscured by the teaching of the Church *about* the Master. Against the teaching of the Church we have no word to utter; at the same time, what is eternally and logically and chronologically of chiefest importance, is the Teaching of Jesus Himself.

We have indicated briefly that the engrossing theme of Jesus was the Kingdom of God, and that this seemed to the Pre-eminent Man of the human race, the world's great need. We think, therefore, that if this solution of the evils of human life was offered by Him whom millions of men acknowledge to be the Son of God, and whom all acknowledge to be the ideal man, it becomes the duty, and it is the privilege of every thoughtful mind to inquire, "What is meant by 'The Kingdom of God'? What is this Kingdom which men are to seek?" For the conviction, so aptly expressed by Richard Watson Gilder, is deepening universally and steadily:

"If Jesus Christ is a man,  
And only a man, I say  
That of all mankind I cleave to Him,  
And to Him will I cleave away.  
If Jesus Christ is a God,  
And the only God, I swear  
I will follow Him through Heaven and Hell,  
The earth, the sea, and the air."

It is, therefore, our purpose to consider the Kingdom of God in its essential characteristics, as it is revealed in the Teaching of Jesus. Preparatory, however, to the more detailed investigation, we will consider:

1. The meaning of the phrase, "The Kingdom of God" or "The Kingdom of Heaven."
2. The origin and pre-Christian development of the idea which the phrase embodies.
3. The significance attached to the expression when used by Jesus.

Now first let us consider the phrase itself and its meaning.<sup>1</sup>

The expressions, "The Kingdom of God" and "The Kingdom of Heaven," are apparently unequivocal and definite. This definiteness, however, soon begins to recede when one endeavors to define the meaning of the phrase. What is the significance? Can the reader give any ready answer? And yet this expression stands prominently on many pages of the New Testament, and is written large on almost every page of the Synoptic Gospels. Surely we have a right to expect that those who would read their Bible intelligently, should determine at the earliest possible moment the meaning of an expression which is certainly among the most important in the Sacred Book, and which furnishes the key without which very many passages are most effectually sealed.

Now, as to the significance of the phrase, first let us consider the word "Kingdom." We are inclined to believe that we know the force of this word: it seems simple and easily intelligible, but a little reflection proves the word ambiguous. In our common speech, "kingdom" is used in different senses. For instance, we speak of the Kingdom of England, and a moment or two later perhaps, of the Vegetable or the Mineral Kingdom. Is the sense of the word the same in both expressions? Manifestly, it is not; and we recognize the difference at once. The word may be used, indeed, to define the territory or the country that is subject to a king; when it is used in this sense, the foreign possessions of the country are not commonly included in the idea. We speak, for instance, of the Kingdom of England without including Canada or Australia. So in this way the word has a definite, concrete, territorial sense: it is synonymous with "realm." But there is another sense almost as popular as this territorial one, in which the word is used. We refer to the inhabitants of a country, or to the popula-

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix B, "The Phrases, 'Kingdom of Heaven' and 'Kingdom of God.'"

tion subject to a king, as the "Kingdom." We say that the kingdom was disturbed, or that the entire kingdom was alarmed. Here, of course, the population of the country is referred to, and here "kingdom" is identical with the subjects of the realm. But there is another interesting sense to be considered. This word is also used in a more indefinite and abstract sense; at times it possesses a larger, wider, and apparently a more intangible meaning. For instance, men speak of the Animal, the Vegetable and the Mineral Kingdoms; by these they mean those divisions or spheres in which a certain law prevails and holds sway; as in the Animal Kingdom, the law of sentient life. Or again, in referring to the Kingdom of George V, we may mean, not merely the limited territorial Kingdom of England, but rather, wherever the authority of the King is acknowledged and obeyed, whether in Canada, Australia, India, or the distant Islands of the Sea. Here "kingdom" is synonymous with, and equivalent to "sovereignty" or "rule." Thus we find that we have quite different, yet not wholly unrelated, senses of the word "kingdom" in our English tongue. It becomes therefore, a question of prime importance to determine which of these interpretations shall be applied to the Biblical expression—"The Kingdom of God." Are we to interpret the watchword of Jesus in terms of the abstract or of the concrete? Is it to be understood of a definite organization, an ecclesiastical "realm," or shall we understand it as applying to the people, or persons, who are subject to Heaven or to God? Or, lastly, Is it to be understood of that division, sphere or domain—whatever and wherever it may be—in which the authority of God and the Law of Heaven prevail and are supreme? Is it a rule or sovereignty? Surely these are important and imperative questions; they ought to be answered by every intelligent Christian; and they are of the gravest importance to every minister of Christ, who would understand his Master's aim and teaching.

In the Talmud, and in later Jewish literature, the expression is more commonly used in the latter sense—that of sovereignty or "rule." The Old Testament itself, no less than subsequent Jewish literature, bears testimony to this usage, as we shall find later on. Yet it would be very unwise in our interpretation of "The Kingdom of God," to reject wholly any of the senses or interpretations of the word "kingdom" which



have been given above; for in so doing, we would seriously curtail a term, which is at once most expressive and most elusive. Indeed, it ought to be borne in mind constantly that it is extremely difficult to define adequately—i. e., in any succinct or concise way,—the meaning of this phrase: not because the sense is hazy, and the term inconclusive, and meaning nothing in reality, but because the expression is so pregnant with meaning. However, in defining “The Kingdom of God,” usually one of the interpretations mentioned above is adopted, and often to the exclusion of all others, the most common, and apparently the simplest, being to identify the Kingdom of Heaven with the Christian Church. This too common and superficial view is the bane of much of our Christianity, and the effectual means by which many are deterred from gaining any true and adequate insight into the august conception of Jesus of Nazareth. Nothing has been more harmful throughout the centuries; nothing is more harmful to-day. While this interpretation should not be rigorously excluded from the possible and allowable interpretations of the phrase, it should be rigorously placed in, and be made to abide in, a secondary and subordinate position; for it teems with error. Yet withal there is one sense of the expression which indicates its basic and fundamental idea; of this one must be the possessor and the ever-conscious possessor, if he would wend his way successfully and satisfactorily through the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth. *“The Kingdom of God” suggests and denotes the “sovereignty” or “rule” of God, or of Heaven.* Whether this rule be over a realm, or a people, or an individual, is a secondary and a subsidiary matter. “The sovereignty of God” is the fundamental conception of the phrase: all else is, indeed, secondary.

The most concise and the most explicit indication of the phrase's meaning is that given by Jesus Himself in the Lord's Prayer, in the words “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven” (St. Matthew 6:10). Or again, the meaning of the expression may be gathered from Our Lord's emphatic declaration: “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but *he that doeth the will* of My Father which is in Heaven.” The inherent and essentially inward and spiritual character of the Kingdom may also be seen from such a passage as St. Luke 17:20, 21. Jesus

is replying to the Pharisees, who were inquiring anxiously as to the time when the Kingdom of God should come. His words are: "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, Lo here, lo there! for, behold, the Kingdom of God is within you." The words "within you" may also be translated "in the midst of you"; but whichever translation is accepted, the emphasis is placed upon the inward and spiritual aspect of the Kingdom. Many additional passages might be cited in substantiation of our contention; in fact, as the reader proceeds through these pages, numerous quotations from both the New Testament and the Old Testament will be met with, all of which will be found to bear upon this interpretation.<sup>1</sup>

Enough has now been said, however, to indicate that the essential thought of the phrase, "The Kingdom of God," is the *sovereignty of God*; or, if we choose to view it from its manward side, it is *obedience to God's will*. The phrase may be defined, therefore, as "the domain in which God's Holy Will is done in and among men."

Valuable testimony to the validity of this interpretation is furnished by Professor Dalman in his "Words of Jesus," when he says,—"No doubt can be entertained that both in the Old Testament and in Jewish literature *malekoth* (kingdom), when applied to God, means always the 'kingly rule,' never the 'kingdom' as if it were meant to suggest the territory governed by Him. For the Old Testament see Psalms 103:19; 145:11, 12, 13, cf. Obad. 21, Ps. 29:29. For the Jewish literature, the instances to be cited later on. To-day, as in antiquity, an Oriental 'kingdom' is not a body politic in our sense, a people or land under some form of constitution, but merely a 'sovereignty' which embraces a particular territory. We shall be justified, therefore, in starting from this signification of *malekoth* as employed by Jesus" (p. 94). Passages from later Jewish writings might be cited here, but, inasmuch as several of the most important of these will be quoted in a later

<sup>1</sup> The fundamental thought and idea of "The Kingdom of God" is clearly, if somewhat indirectly, indicated also in two of the most suggestive passages in the New Testament. In these, the poles of Jesus' thought are found to be the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Satan (St. Luke 10:17, 18, 21, 22; 11:15, 17-22).

chapter, they are not now brought before the reader; when adduced, they will be found to support the assertion of Professor Dalman.

The significance of the descriptive phrase "of Heaven," or "of God," now remains to be considered: for the expression is not merely "the Kingdom," but the Kingdom which is "of God" or "of Heaven."

The genitive denotes the origin and source, and also, we think, the character of the Kingdom. The idea is: In contradistinction to the kingdoms "in" and "of" this world, this "kingdom" is to be "from" and "of" heaven.<sup>1</sup>

While the kingdoms of the world are of this sphere, the result of human effort and development, reared by men, and the product of their labor, it is not so with the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of Heaven is not developed from below, it is introduced from above; born, not of earth, but of heaven; not the product of man's labor, but "of the creative activity of God." Yet it is profoundly true that men have their part in the upbuilding of the Kingdom, and that a most essential part; but, because the initiative lies with God, and the whole, in its conception and development, would prove abortive, without the ever-present care and supervision of Deity, it is rightly denominated "The Kingdom of God."

Further, the Kingdom is "of Heaven" or "of God" not

<sup>1</sup> Many New Testament passages corroborate this idea and set forward this aspect of the Kingdom. The "Kingdom" is represented as "coming" in St. Matthew 6:10: "Thy Kingdom come"; as given to those who are worthy of it, thus emphasizing God's ownership of it: St. Matthew 21:43, "The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof"; the Kingdom is "received," St. Mark 10:15: "Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein"; it is "prepared" by God from the foundation of the world (St. Matthew 25:34); and it is "inherited" by men: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"; mankind "enter" the Kingdom through compliance with God's demands: "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (St. Matthew 5:20); finally, the Kingdom must be sought after: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness" (St. Matthew 6:33). These, and similar passages, are clearly confirmatory of the heavenly source and origin of the Kingdom of God.



only in its source, but also in its character. God and the World, Heaven and Earth, are often contrasted in the pages of the Sacred Scriptures; the terms, indeed, represent different principles, widely separated, always opposed and waging an eternal warfare. The kingdoms of the earth, save as they have been leavened with spiritual principles, are the embodiment of "worldly" ideas; they have been formed, they are maintained, and their boundaries are extended through "worldly" principles and methods. These kingdoms are the incarnation of man's conceptions and ambitions; they reveal man's character as divorced from God. Not so, however, is it with the Kingdom of God. Unlike the kingdoms of the world, the Kingdom of God is founded, maintained and extended through heavenly principles and by Godly means; it is the embodiment of God's ideas, conceptions and ambitions; it reveals man's true character and the possibilities inherent in human nature. The Kingdom of God is also governed by divine laws; not by laws of human enactment. Such, in brief, is the significance of the descriptive clause "of God" or "of Heaven."

It is most noteworthy, however, that Jesus never defined the Kingdom of God; His method was not that of definition, but of suggestion, comparison, and illustration: He always told what the Kingdom of God was *like*. Jesus, in fact, was peculiarly and happily free from the theological license of affirmation. Why He failed to define the Kingdom of God is a fruitful source of conjecture. Perhaps the expression was already suffering from an excess of definition; perhaps He simply adopted the free Oriental and figurative manner of speech, or He may have sought to stimulate—not to satisfy—the minds of men; or again—and this is the most probable reason for His wholly admirable self-restraint,—He well knew that to define the conception is to curtail, perhaps to seriously misrepresent it. The phrase itself, "The Kingdom of Heaven," in the magnitude of its suggested totality indicates the inability of the finite mind to fully comprehend an infinite conception. An infinite conception, indeed, defies finite definition; infinite realities defy human comprehension. For this cause, the method of the Master was suggestive and fragmentary, not systematic and exhaustive. There is, indeed, an exquisite touch of pathos in the kindliness of Jesus, who, Himself, supremely the Master of

the idea, yet accommodates His teaching to the limitations and the finiteness of man. An idea, so complex, so vast and so all-inclusive, forever hovers in a mist of elusiveness; we catch a glimpse now and again of the reality,—we reach for it, and lo, it is gone; we seek to define, and the illimitable conception baffles our most strenuous endeavors. The utmost that humanity can do is to throw out words at the august object, in the hope that they may be measurably adequate; an approximation of the truth is all that we can hope for.

We hesitate, then, to define the "Kingdom of God," but should the rash attempt be made, our approximate definition would be this: The Kingdom of God is the absolute sovereignty of the Universe, the absolute rule of the World and of each individual by the Will of the Omnipotent and Righteous God; exemplified and made possible to humanity in the Person of Jesus Christ; it is the full realization of the mind and character of God. The great difficulty, however, encountered in any attempt to define the Kingdom of God, renders more imperative the duty of determining what is the basic and fundamental idea of the phrase. Hence, we learn that the expression means, in the last analysis, a rule or sovereignty, having its source and seat of authority in God, and in character, illustrating the principles which obtain and prevail in Heaven.<sup>1</sup>

It is now our privilege to inquire: What is the Origin and Development of the Idea expressed by the words, "The Kingdom of God" or "The Kingdom of Heaven"?

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix C, "Various Definitions of The Kingdom."

## CHAPTER II

### THE ORIGIN AND PRE-CHRISTIAN DEVELOPMENT OF THE IDEA

OF all the solutions of the problem of human existence, that offered in the Bible has seized most forcibly upon the minds and hearts of men. The Bible, indeed, offers the highest philosophy of life: it is the truest philosophy of history, and the noblest history of philosophy.

The Bible, however, is an entire library in itself; and although it is the production of many ages, of many pens, and of many minds of varying degrees of intellectuality and spiritual insight, written for different peoples, called into being by manifold circumstances, and aimed to meet diverse needs and exigencies, there is a substantial unity underlying the whole. There is, as it were, a silken cord running throughout the entire literature, binding together the various parts, and differentiating this from all other literature: *that cord is The Kingdom of God*. However the authors of the various books may treat their subject, when their writings are analyzed, their theme is found to be "The Kingdom of Heaven." The careful historian, the far-seeing statesman, the ecstatic seer, the quiet philosopher, the powerful preacher, the sweet-spirited poet, the thoughtful scholar, the practical man of affairs—all contribute their share to the Sacred Literature, and vie with each other in setting forth the Kingdom of God. The Hebrews, in fact, were essentially a people of one idea, and their literature reflects their life.

The Bible, indeed, is the history of the revelation, the evolution and the realization of an idea—The Kingdom of God; a revelation not complete and final in its beginning, but gradual and progressive, ever adapted and accommodated to the receptivity of man, and following the law of development that is written everywhere in the Universe, "first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." Let us trace this develop-

ment in bold, brief outline, with just enough attention to detail to mark the various steps in the progress and their significance.

In introducing the problem of the world and of life, the Scriptures begin with the declaration: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). The writer also informs us of the satisfaction felt by the Deity with the work of His hands: "God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good" (Gen. 1:31). At once, however, the question arises—What is meant by the expression "very good"? What is the standard of comparison that is to determine the "goodness"? The world, or creation, was "very good," but "very good" as related to whom, or to what? Manifestly, the standpoint of God is intended. That creation was "very good" means that, in its relation to God and to all other creatures, everything created *was as it ought to be*. This, indeed, is the true standard of goodness in every age. There was a condition of perfect harmony between the Creator and the created. There was no antagonism, but perfect obedience; Creator and creature were at peace. On every side the mind of God was revealed; His laws were admitted and obeyed; God was King, the world of Creation was His Kingdom.

This relation of God to the physical world is throughout the Old Testament emphasized by prophet and by psalmist. Psalm 47:7 reads:—"God is the king of all the earth." In the Psalms generally, and in many passages of the Old Testament, this Kingship of God is represented as extending over angels and men, the nations and kingdoms of the earth; in fact, this sovereignty is co-extensive with creation, even the forces of nature are regarded as His ministers, while all things serve Him (Isa. i; Chron. 29:11).

But instantly the question arises: "Have not men rebelled against God; do they not oppose His will?" If so, how can God be their King, and the world of men constitute His Kingdom? This question is a natural and a logical one, and while it is apparently unanswerable, it was both raised and answered of old. The true and adequate answer lies in Shakespeare's famous dictum:

"There's a divinity that shapes our ends,  
Rough-hew them how we will."

Indeed, this well-known and seemingly weighty objection to the Supremacy of God, as apparent in an early age as in this, did not cause the Biblical writers to minimize for an instant God's full and entire sovereignty over man. Again and again the Old Testament teaches God's providence over all, nations and individuals, heaven and earth alike. One of the most explicit and interesting of the passages is Daniel 4:34, 35. Jeremiah, too, represents men as clay in the hands of God, who moulds them even as the potter moulds his clay. He tells us that if nations will not be moulded into vessels of honorable use in serving the divine ends, they will be moulded to other uses as vessels of dishonor. Again Psalm 76:10 declares that even the wrath of man is made to praise God, while the residue of wrath is restrained.

Thus the Biblical conception is, that despite the opposition of nations and of individuals, God's providence rules over all; that so great and superb is God's plan, so august is His Omniscience, so invincible and far-reaching His Omnipotence, that due-account of human self-will and human opposition was taken *ab initio*, without detracting from the fact that God is King and that the world of nature and the world of men constitute His Kingdom. Hence, when looking toward the ultimate outcome of creation, we may believe with entire freedom of faith, with England's late laureate:

"That there is  
One God, one law, one element  
And one far-off divine event  
To which the whole creation moves."

We may believe this fully and freely, because "There is a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will." Such a faith, indeed, is essential to rational existence; life, without it, is unintelligible. God began as Monarch and He reigns as Sovereign.

While this view is eminently comforting to those who are concerned about the *denouement* of Creation, it is eminently unsatisfactory from the standpoint of Heaven, and even from the standpoint of those men who have a keen sense of the "fitness of things" and are alive to the deep problems of life. Can

God, in view of His very nature, be satisfied with such a Kingdom or Sovereignty? God, in the essence of His Being, according to the Bible, is Free-will and Love, no less than Power. If God is Liberty and Love, we cannot expect Him (humanly speaking) to be satisfied with a sovereignty over men, which is non-moral in character and the product or force, rather than loving co-operation. Hence there is, in the very nature of God, the potentiality of a far-higher and nobler Kingdom than one founded upon mere authority. An earthly parent desires the *free* and *loving* obedience of his children, not an obedience rendered to his authority alone. So it is with God. He desires and seeks the submission of men to His authority, their obedience to His rule, but an obedience which is both intelligent and willing, conscious and affectionate.

The world of nature, let us remember, obeys the will of God, because His laws are inherent in its very constitution; there is no freedom of the will, no power of choice, no self-consciousness; it *must* proceed in its God-appointed channel. In the world of men, however, there is freedom of the will, a power of choice, self-consciousness. Man is not a machine, made, wound up and designed to run. Man is a personality; he is alone capable of entering into the closest relationship with his Creator; *man can love and consciously obey*. Therefore, the great world-problem is not what it is often supposed to be: Will God's end in Creation be attained? Rather is it: Will man co-operate with God in the realization and attainment of that end? Thus, as in the inherent nature of God, there lies is the essential nature of man, the possibility of, the foundation for, and the prophecy of a Kingdom of God, far higher and nobler, because moral and spiritual, than that which exists in the world of nature. The Kingdom of God in the physical world, indeed, is one thing; the Kingdom of God in humanity is another.

Now this idea of a Kingdom of God in *humanity* was God's object in Creation, if the Biblical standpoint be accepted. Upon the Kingdom of God in the physical world, God would rear a Kingdom of God in humanity; the one representing an unconscious obedience; the other, a conscious and willing obedience to His will. But it must be noted that in man's ability to do good there lies also the possibility of his doing evil. The very



freedom of man's will renders the Kingdom of God in humanity open to a temporary defeat, at least; man might choose *not* to obey God.

"Disobey!  
You may divide the Universe with God,  
Keeping your will unbent, and hold a world  
Where He is not supreme."

Such freedom of choice, indeed, marked out, apparently, two distinct paths along which the Kingdom of God could be realized—the pathway of obedience,—the pathway of disobedience. What the course of the world-development would have been had humanity seen fit to obey God, we do not and cannot know; what the tortuous path, trodden by humanity for centuries in view of its self-will and disobedience is, history,—lit up by the interpretative touch of the Sacred Scriptures,—reveals.

In fact, in Genesis, immediately after the account of the Creation, we have the far-famed story of the Fall. Whether this narrative is history or myth, whether it represents fact or fancy, does not now concern us; for whichever view be accepted, its substantial truth is evident, namely, that God's original plan in Creation for a Kingdom of God in humanity was not then realized. When the alternative was presented to Adam and Eve, either to refrain from eating of the forbidden fruit, and, in so doing, to obey God's will, thus founding the Kingdom and establishing His sovereignty over humanity, or, to eat of the accursed tree, thus disobeying God's law and violating His will, they elected to disobey, and thereby declined to render that conscious and willing obedience which nature renders unconsciously but spontaneously to the Creator. Consequently, all hope of a Kingdom of God in nature and humanity alike, bound together by a common obedience to God's will, for the time vanished. The Kingdom of God in humanity, indeed, became a future possibility rather than a present fact. This far-famed refusal, initiatory and typical of humanity's course in the future, also brought discord into a world in which harmony should have reigned, and issued in sin and death. Milton rightly sings:

“Of man’s first disobedience and the fruit  
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste  
Brought death into the world and all our woe,  
With loss of Eden. Till one greater man  
Restore us and regain the blissful seat.”

Humanity had, indeed, selected its path; but over and above the rebellious subjects, according to the Biblical representation, there was still the considerate, yearning care of God. From this point, indeed, the Old Testament gives a vivid, coherent and fascinating recital of God’s endeavor to deliver man from the power of the evils, attendant and consequent upon his insubordination. While the story of the Fall may seem to occupy but a trivial position in the Bible, outside of Genesis; and while it must be admitted that the account to us so important and suggestive, is passed by in almost entire silence, it does not require argument to convince the thoughtful reader that the idea, embodied in the story of the Fall, is the ever-prominent idea underlying the subsequent course of events, and the very *raison d’être* of the history which follows.

The earliest note of deliverance, and the prediction of the ultimate triumph of the Kingdom of God—if so much can be claimed from a passage, at best vague and inconclusive—is sounded in Genesis 3:15:—“I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise its heel.” Certainly if there is no clear promise of the Messiah here, as is often alleged by theologians, notably by Martin Luther, there is at least a significant prediction of man’s eternal warfare with evil, and a slight foreshadowing, perhaps, of his ultimate victory. The subsequent history of Revelation, however, is developed logically from this promise, and reveals not only the painful struggle of humanity with evil, but the gradually developing plan of a God of Love for the utter overthrow of the Kingdom of Satan, and the final establishment, through a mingled operation of mercy and judgment, of the Kingdom of God upon earth. If we bear this in mind, the Old Testament especially, valuable as it is for its many ethical lessons, becomes a more vital Book, disclosing not merely here and there some sublime moral truth, but rather the Universal Plan of the God of all the Ages.

The Old Testament, indeed, graphically depicts the terri-



ble events which ensued upon man's refusal to conform to the laws of God; how the knowledge of His will grew fainter and more faint, until it bade fair to disappear entirely; how man's desire and ability to obey became weaker and weaker, until the future appeared dark indeed. While humanity was thus floundering in the slough of self-invited mire, that all hope of a future reclamation of mankind might not prove vain and the effort futile, God determined to begin anew with man. The rebellious race was to be destroyed, with the exception of the righteous Noah and his family; the descendants of Seth were to be preserved by the Ark (Gen. 6:5-8). Noah and his family, indeed, were to represent the Kingdom of God, for they acknowledged God's authority and obeyed His will. Presently, Shem, a son of Noah, and his descendants, were chosen as the line of salvation, the agents of the contemplated deliverance (Genesis 9:26-27). Later, the line was restricted to the family of Terah, whose son, Abram, was a mighty instrument in the hands of God for the achievement of His purpose. The early endeavor, indeed, to keep alive allegiance to God, and to preserve an adequate idea of the right of God to rule over men, issued in the call of him who has been styled "the world-historical figure." So great was humanity's impetus away from God, that a strong personality and a very marked individuality, seconded by the favor of Heaven, was necessary to check the ruinous degeneration. The needed instrumentality God raised up in Abraham; to him was entrusted the unique task of preserving God's truth, which was ever more and more endangered by the prevalent and rampant idolatry. Leaving Ur of the Chaldees in obedience to the divine call, Abram journeyed toward the land of Canaan, where, removed from the dangerous distractions and the subtle temptations of the home-environment, he might devote himself, with undivided attention, to the task imposed upon him. There, a covenant, or agreement, was made with him by God. In virtue of his ready obedience to the call, God promised: "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee, and in thee shall *all the families of the earth be blessed*" (Genesis 12:2-3).

Whether Abraham was fully aware of the significance of

his call, and his part in the gracious purposes of God, or whether the Hebrews themselves were, in the earlier years of their history, or whether we have in this and similar passages apparently descriptive of that earlier history, the prophetic interpretation of the events of a distant past in the light of a splendid and more clearly understood present, in which they know themselves to be the spokesmen of God and able, by divine inspiration, to trace the slender thread of God's providence through the labyrinthine, and apparently chaotic past, may be an interesting question; but it does not affect, whatever may be our conclusion, the significance of the part which the Father of the Faithful played in the early development of the Kingdom of God. And certainly, in subsequent ages, that part came to be clearly understood and generally acknowledged by the Hebrews. The choice of Abraham, in fact, marked the beginning of the *outward* or *external* development of the Kingdom. Truly might the later Jews say: "Before our Father Abraham came into the world, God was, as it were, only the king of heaven; but when Abraham came, he made Him to be King over heaven and earth." Abraham, indeed, became "the Father of the Faithful," i. e., the progenitor of those of every age and clime who, believing in God endeavor to fulfil His will. As such an ancestor, the whole earth was to be blessed through him and his direct descendants.

Later, this promise was confirmed to Isaac (Genesis 26:2-4). Subsequently, a similar promise was reiterated to Jacob in the dream at Bethel, when he was fleeing, at his mother's instigation, from his brother's wrath. In that sublime vision of the Ladder which reached from earth to heaven, and upon which the angels of God were ascending and descending, Jacob first learned of a communication existing between heaven and earth; nay, more, despite the untowardness of past events, and the inauspicious surroundings of the present, he learned that he was a rung in the ladder which connected the heavens and the earth (Gen. 28:11-15).

So, step by step, may be traced the gradual advance in the fulfilment of the divine intention, as it is depicted in the Old Testament. Then with Jacob and his sons, there enter upon the scene the progenitors of the Twelve Tribes of Israel, whose advent compels us, in tracing the idea of the Kingdom of God,

to deal with a *nation*, the nation of Israel, instead of with individuals primarily, as heretofore. One of the most interesting portions of the Old Testament narrative, is that which recounts, how, in the Providence of God, the descendants of Jacob, through the base treachery of the jealous brethren, manifested in the enslaving of Joseph, came to dwell in the land of Egypt. This apparently trivial circumstance was of the utmost importance to the future well-being of Israel. Had the paltry tribe remained in Palestine, it must inevitably—at least, so far as human eye can see,—have perished at the hands of the surrounding peoples, or have lost its identity through amalgamation with them. Time, peace, and prosperity were the imperative necessities of the moment. These were secured through the sojourn in Egypt; and there the Israelites were prepared for national existence, through the unbroken prosperity, which, attending their advent, characterized the reigns of many Pharaohs, and assured the opportunity for needful growth, until the band of strangers in a strange land had become sufficiently numerous to arouse the jealousy and animosity of their Egyptian hosts. This antipathy, leading to strong coercive and preventive measures, sufficed to alienate their love for Egypt during the closing years of their sojourn, and filled them with an enthusiasm for liberty. Thus did the vicissitudes of prosperity, on the one hand, and of adversity, on the other, minister to the gradual unfolding of God's purpose. The alienation from the fleshpots of Egypt was soon followed by the Exodus, which, under the leadership of Moses, marked the beginning of the national existence of the Israelites.

All of these steps, however, seem to have been preparatory, and, while we can trace readily their obvious importance, viewing the history of the earlier age from the standpoint of the later age, they do not appear to be closely related to the idea of the Kingdom of God. Not so, however, is it with the next step, to which the preceding stages were essential and preparatory. Now that the Israelites were grown into a nation, and had been delivered by Moses, a further and important advance was to be made. Henceforth, God would deal with the nation, as well as with the individual, in relation to the Kingdom, or rule of God. But the incoherent elements must be welded into a coherent nation. For this purpose the cowardly tribes,

but recently rescued slaves, were disciplined in the wilderness, and a most solemn covenant made with them at Mt. Sinai. There the nation received from God laws and institutions for their use; there the nation was adopted as peculiarly God's People. "And Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, saying, 'Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now, therefore, if ye will *obey* my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me from above all people: for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a *kingdom of priests, and an holy nation*'" (Exodus 19:3-6).

That Israel acceded to the agreement is evident from Ex. 24:4-9, where the solemn ceremonies which attended the ratification of the covenant are described. The importance of this step in the developing plan of the Kingdom of God cannot be over-estimated, although it is commonly emphasized to the disparagement, or neglect, of the origin of the idea of the Kingdom and the essential and preparatory stages which have just been considered. While the transition from what might be called the individual, or tribal stage, to the national stage of the Kingdom of God, ought to be exceptionally emphasized: yet to lose sight of the original conception as it existed in the mind of God, and its feeble and struggling expression throughout the patriarchal period, is to rob the idea of much of its majesty and splendor. Instead of marking the beginning of the Kingdom of God, the step under consideration should be regarded as the most important step forward in an advance begun long since.

Thus Israel, by express covenant, was to be God's peculiar treasure,—a Kingdom of God, and, further,—a Kingdom of priests, and a holy (separated) nation. When the significance of this expression is appreciated, the full meaning of this advance in the developing Kingdom of God becomes apparent. *A Kingdom of Priests!* Now, a priest may be defined as one who stands before men for God, and one who stands before God on behalf of men. In other words, a priest is a mediator, a reconciler: one who seeks to bridge the chasm separating God and man, thus uniting man with God. This, then, was the unique mission of Israel. Israel was to be a domain, or realm,

or obedience (for this is what we have found the word "kingdom" to mean) of those who, in obeying God and serving Him, were to act as Priests, seeking to bring God and man into harmony. Israel was also to become a "holy," i. e., "separated" nation. This is the significance of the word "holy" in this connection. The word does not denote moral rectitude; it is not an attribute of character, but denotes whatever is separated or consecrated to sacred uses. It is in this sense that an Altar is spoken of as the "Holy Table": not that a Table, even if it be an Altar, can be "holy" in the strict sense of the word, for holiness is descriptive of character. The Altar is the Holy Table, in that it is set apart for religious and sacred purposes. Thus Israel, as a nation, was set apart, or separated of God, for His own sacred purposes: to minister, in some marked way, to the august plan of the Deity.

Thus the idea of the Kingdom of God is ever entering more noticeably, and the rule of God becomes more and more a definite end. Hence the title applied by Josephus to the nation's constitution is both correct and expressive. Israel was a theocracy—a Kingdom of God.<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately, this idea of a people wholly consecrated to God was never fully realized, for, from the time of the institution of the covenant itself, rebellion and unfaithfulness were rife. Yet the adequate conception of such a Kingdom had been gained and was at work in the minds of men.

But now that God had a nation, the nation must have a home: such was the land of Canaan. That the people, settling by tribes here and there should lack a central authority and present a memorable spectacle of anarchy and license, need not surprise us, in view of their past history. Their state, or condition, is aptly described as one in which "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes," and "there was none in the land possessing authority." Stability and security, indeed, were alone gained at intervals through the various leaders, who arose from time to time, and whose brilliant military exploits commended them as suitable rulers of the people. They were called Judges. To this era belonged Deborah and Barak, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson. The life of this time is dark

<sup>1</sup> The word, theocracy, is derived from the Greek *theos*, meaning God; and *kratein*, signifying "to rule."



indeed; its hues are mostly sad and somber, yet we cannot doubt that some pleasing features were contributed by those in whom the conception of the Kingdom was an illuminating force. It is probable that the beautiful idyl of Ruth and Naomi reveals the sweet and simple life of many of God's people in the time of the Judges.

Manifestly, the continuance of so chaotic a condition portended even worse degeneration. The people, indeed, actually suffered more and more through incompetent leaders, as, for instance under Eli and his sons. While relief might be given, from time to time, by the appearance of so capable a leader as Samuel, yet the whole trend of events was from bad to worse. Nor was the mind of Israel blind to the sad and disquieting condition of affairs. The people, indeed, were fully aware of the state of disunion and disorder which led to such results. The logic of events, and the need of the hour, pointed to a King. The nations about them were ruled by kings, and why should not Israel have the same advantage?<sup>1</sup>

Thus the idea of kingship entered naturally into the life of the Hebrew people, and subsequent events were of such a nature as to lend convincing eloquence to this idea. The desired stability and union, indeed, could alone be obtained by imitating the neighboring peoples in the inauguration of a kingdom. This conviction, shared, no doubt, by many, became focussed, as it were, in the mind of the Heaven-enlightened seer, Samuel. He, conscious of the imperative need and appreciating thoroughly the situation, did not hesitate to act. In Saul, the son of Kish, he found the man, whose courage, youth, energy, patriotism, and imposing mien, fitted him for the mastery. Thus we have Saul anointed as leader over Israel, and subsequently made King.<sup>2</sup>

In the institution of the Monarchy, an advance of decided importance is made in the developing Kingdom of God. God's people were no longer to be ruled by Him alone: they were

<sup>1</sup> This question had arisen at an earlier time than that of which we write. In the days of Gideon, the people were alive to the advantages of a monarchical rule—even a hereditary monarchy. To Gideon they said, "Rule thou over us, both thou and thy son, and thy son's son also."

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix D, "The Institution of the Monarchy."

to be governed by a *visible King*, the representative or vicegerent of God, who was prophetic of God's Anointed, yet to come, the ideal King of God's everlasting Kingdom. Thus the idea of a single ruler over God's people is introduced; an idea destined to play a most important part in the later history of the Kingdom of God.

The Monarchy, founded under Saul, was consolidated and extended under David. King David, despite the shadows of his later life, is spoken of as a man after God's own heart, and when judged in accordance with the standards of his age, amply deserves the title. It is to him that a promise, somewhat akin to those recorded in the earlier portion of our narrative, is made by God. "And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. . . . I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. . . . And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee; thy throne shall be established forever" (II Sam. 7:12-16).

The intimate relationship that Israel's king was to bear to God is evident from a careful perusal of such a passage as II Sam. 7:12-16. The king is regarded as the mouthpiece of God, representing Him in every respect, and ruling, not in his own name and right, but in the name of God, and for Him. It is hardly necessary to say that while there was a more or less constant effort to realize the ideal of the nation as the Kingdom of God, and of the King, as the typical representative of God, the ideal was very imperfectly realized, even under David; and less so under Solomon, with whom as sovereign the kingdom attained the zenith of its earthly glory. Nor was it realized under the best of the kings after the division of the Kingdom; even Josiah and Hezekiah did not adequately represent the theocracy. This now brings us to the conception of the Kingdom of God entertained by the prophets.

We have found that the idea of the Kingdom was restricted to families or tribes during the Patriarchal period, and that it was somewhat obscure; that it became national in extent and more definite in idea during the Mosaic period; that to the idea of the visible Kingdom was added the conception of a

visible King, the representative of God, during the Monarchical period. Let us now inquire as to the distinctive Prophetic contribution to the conception of the Kingdom, during what may be termed the Prophetic period of Israel's history.



## CHAPTER III

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE IDEA

THAT Israel was possessed of a magnificent ideal, which Israel had never fulfilled, was perfectly apparent to the Prophets. At the same time, the hope and the belief that Israel would some day fulfil the ideal was grounded firmly in the prophetic heart. No failure, however dire, could dispel it, no disaster crush it. The most salient and amazing characteristic of the prophets, indeed, is their sublime and invincible optimism, when pessimism seemed more natural and sensible. Even when the possibility of Israel's realizing her high destiny seemed least, the prophetic conviction that Israel would fulfil her destiny, shone brightest. One thing, however, was absolutely certain: the coming consummation of their hopes would be *in the future*. The disruption of the Kingdom, the evil days that overtook the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah before their fall, the violence within as well as without, their final overthrow, and the humiliation and captivity of the nation, caused the prophets to look to the future for the fulfilment of that dream which was dearer to them than life itself. God had promised and He could not lie: His Kingdom would come. The perfect King would appear: when, they did not know, but come, He would. Such was the prophetic reasoning.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah, for instance, declares, "Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel," i.e., "God with us" (7:14). Again we find him declaring with all the intensity of his prophetic soul, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the *government* shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his *government* and peace there shall be no end, upon the *throne* of David, and upon his *kingdom*, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this" (9:6-7). No better conception of the King and the Kingdom, and no better witness to the prophetic conviction that this splendid dream will be realized can be found in the prophetic literature than that furnished to us by Isaiah in the words just quoted.

Further, when the King and the Kingdom have come, then will Israel fulfil her destiny, becoming in very truth a Kingdom of Priests who reconcile the nations to God. The universal aspect of Israel's mission breaks forth clear and strong in the prophetic literature. National insignificance and humiliation could not break the vision. The prophets, indeed, looked forward with the utmost confidence to the time when God's sovereignty should be realized, not only over Israel but over all the earth.<sup>1</sup> More and more, however, did it become evident to the prophets eagerly awaiting the consummation of the Messianic hope, that the true theocracy would not be inaugurated by even such kings as Hezekiah and Josiah, and that it could not be realized in the midst of the prevailing conditions. In consequence, higher and more spiritual conceptions of the coming Kingdom became apparent. The new covenant is to differ somewhat from the old. It is to be an inner rather than an outer thing; upon the heart rather than upon tables of stone.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Micah writes: "But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established on the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and the people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: and nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (4:1-3). Isaiah 42:6-7 is equally explicit: "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and will give thee for a covenant of the people, *for a light of the Gentiles*; To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house."

<sup>2</sup> Jeremiah voices this conception: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the days that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they break, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord; But this shall be the covenant that I will make unto the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put *my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts*, and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for

Together with this lofty conception of the Kingdom, and, no doubt, because of it, there comes a nobler view of the coming King. It is felt that if the nature of the Kingdom is lofty and spiritual, the King of the Kingdom should bear a very close relationship to God. Thus the founder of the Kingdom was regarded with an ever-increasing reverence by Israel. His person and His prerogatives were constantly magnified.<sup>1</sup> It ought to be remembered, however, that throughout the Old Testament, the chief interest is the Kingdom of God. The importance of the Messiah, or the coming King, lay in the fact that he was to be the medium of the Kingdom. Great as he was, he was only of importance in relation to the Kingdom of God. This truth has been lost sight of by the Christian Church to a great extent. The relationship, indeed, has been reversed. The Person of the Messiah is everything, the King-

they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord" (31:31-34). Ezekiel speaks in the same strain: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you; and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them" (36:25-27). Joel also gives us a passage of emphatic significance. "And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants, and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit" (2:28, 29).

<sup>1</sup>Of this tendency, Micah affords an interesting illustration: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (5:2). The coming King is, according to a common interpretation, referred to thus by Daniel: "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (7:13, 14). Malachi declares: "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts" (3:1).

dom somewhat subordinate.

There entered at this time, also, from a due appreciation of the inward and spiritual character of the new Covenant, or Kingdom, a keen and painful sense of the great labor and difficulty involved in its introduction. Because of the presence of human sin and human opposition, the heralds of the Kingdom, despite their relation to God and His majestic attributes, must perform their task at the expense of toil and suffering. Their life, indeed, was to be a path of thorns. So we have the conception of the Suffering Servant of God, that "in which all the prophetic force of the genius of Israel seemed concentrated" (Isa. 52:14; 53). The idea is that he who would do God's will, and seek to persuade men to God's allegiance, must expect to suffer. This truth, indeed, had already been most signally illustrated in the history of God's Chosen People, and in the persons of their most illustrious men,—Joseph, Moses, David, and many of the Prophets.<sup>1</sup>

As to the form of the Kingdom, with that seemingly irresistible tendency of human nature to idealize the past, often to the sad neglect of the present, the coming Kingdom was viewed as assuming Davidic splendor. The nation would be restored and re-united, so Ezekiel fondly painted (Ez. 37); Isaiah sees the nation purified and converted with all former institutions in full vigor and effectiveness (Isaiah 1:25-27). Israel, indeed, would attain the zenith of her glory, while the surrounding nations, to whom had been given the knowledge of the true God, would be incorporated with the Chosen people (Isaiah 2:23), or tributary to them (Isaiah 60). Such, substantially, was the prophetic conception, although different prophets might emphasize individual aspects or characteristics of the Kingdom, according to their individuality or the time in which they lived. To Isaiah, the great prophet-statesman of the turbulent times of Ahaz and Hezekiah, the Kingdom appeared as a state in the very height of political and material prosperity. To Jeremiah, in the sad and evil days of Judah's decline and fall, the Kingdom assumed a decidedly ethical character: his dream was of a reformed people. While to the brightening vision of the Second Isaiah, in the happy days of the

<sup>1</sup> This aspect of God's service is also most pathetically set forth in the 22nd Psalm.

return from exile, the Kingdom seemed to be distinctively religious—Israel, fulfilling her high destiny as the religious teacher of the nations.

There appeared, however, during the Prophetic Period, an idea of great importance to our study. In the early days of the Hebrew people, the state or nation as a whole, was identified with the Kingdom of God. The bounds of the one were the bounds of the other. Every Hebrew, as a Hebrew, was a member of the theocracy. The Kingdom was the entire nation. Later in their history, however, and especially in the era of the prophets, this idea experienced a novel development. We find the conception of a theocracy within a theocracy, a church within a church, a Kingdom of God within the supposed Kingdom of God. This is a peculiarity of even the earlier prophets. Amos and Hosea, for instance, while they predict in unsparing terms, a due and dire punishment for the people's sins, yet, as emphatically declare that a *remnant* would survive and be true to Jehovah. This doctrine of a remnant, indeed, is a marked characteristic of the prophetic writings. No matter how dark and threatening the impending night, a brighter day would dawn, with at least a remnant true to God.

While this idea is met with in the earlier prophets, Elijah, for instance, it received a more pronounced development in the closing years of the nation's history as a Kingdom. To the enlightened vision of the prophets, their people, as a whole, seemed to be doomed. God's patience was exhausted. Hence we notice that their efforts are bent toward the salvation of a remnant of the people, this remnant to do the work for God. Thus was the idea introduced that the Kingdom of God was not co-extensive with the nation, and not rightly the possession of every Hebrew in virtue of his birth. Rather was the Kingdom restricted to a portion of the nation, and the possession of those Hebrews alone, whose integrity of heart and life entitled them to it.<sup>1</sup> This narrowing of the conception seems strangely prophetic of Our Lord's action in choosing His band

<sup>1</sup> This tendency to restrict the idea of the Kingdom is conspicuously exemplified in the conduct of Isaiah (8:16-18): "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples. And I will wait upon the Lord that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him. Behold, I, and the children whom the Lord hath



of disciples from the midst of a nation which, as a whole, would not heed His call. It is eternally prophetic also of the truth that "great achievements made by any people are generally the work of the minority."

The Babylonian Exile of the Chosen People did not in any way crush the expectation of the Kingdom of God. Rather did it strengthen and intensify the conception. The prophecies of Daniel, Ch. 2 and 7, whether we accept the traditional date of the Book, or that which modern scholarship accords to it, amply attests the undimmed splendor of the Messianic hope. His vision of a Kingdom of God, which should succeed the four great world-kingsdoms,—human, not brutish in character, a Kingdom inaugurated of Heaven, universal in extent, and everlasting in time, is of prime importance to our study both in its present stage and in its future development. This vision of Daniel, indeed, did more to stereotype the Jewish idea of the coming Kingdom than any image, figure, or utterance of any earlier prophet. Because of the great significance of Daniel's contribution to the idea of the Kingdom of God, it is well to quote the passage at length. "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. I (Daniel) was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me. I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things. These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the

given me, are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth in Mount Zion." Malachi (3:16) also refers to the intimate association, binding together those who feared the Lord: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord harkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name."

kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever. And the kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." (Daniel 7:13-19 and vs. 27).

Resuming now the thread of our narrative, and for the time being, according to the Book of Daniel its traditional date, it remains to say that after the Exile we have the teaching of the Prophets Haggai and Zechariah.<sup>1</sup> These, however, add nothing that is new or distinctive to the conception of the kingdom. On the other hand, Malachi, who is the last of the prophetic voices of the Old Testament, speaks of the coming Kingdom, and adds that before the advent of that day, Elijah would be sent to prepare the way. "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me" (3:1). "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse" (4:5-6).

Thus the development of the idea of the Kingdom of God closes in the Old Testament. We have endeavored to trace that development in brief, concise outline, noting only the salient steps of progress, until all doubt has been dispelled, and it is apparent that that which called the Hebrew nation into being, and which alone can explain the remarkable history of that still more remarkable people, is the Idea of the Kingdom of God. Without this thread, the Old Testament, in its multitude of details, is utterly unintelligible; with it, the Old Testament is not only intelligible but exceedingly fascinating. This people, their history, and their idea, indeed, are the most striking phenomena of Universal History. However, men may seek to explain its significance, the fact that such a people, such a history, and such an idea were developed, is indisputable. Explanations, naturalistic, diverse, and ingenious, have been offered by the subtle minds of brilliant and acute thinkers and students; but no one has been able to convince the mass of mankind that any explanation which fails to see throughout the entire development the finger of God pointing and directing to a fulfilment which

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix E, "The Character of The Book of Daniel."

bespeaks human redemption, is worthy of acceptance or can adequately explain so marvelous a history and so magnificent a conception. However, much that is foul, degrading and unseemly may be found in the lives of the great men, and in the institutions of Israel—and there is a great deal—justice demands an admission of the presence of Divinity. The words of the late President Harper, of the University of Chicago, express clearly the sanest conclusion as to the history of Israel. "It is the history of a nation, starting on the level of other nations, and gradually rising, through the influence of great leaders, to a more and more noble, more and more true, conception of God, and with every step upward, leaving behind some belief or custom inherited from paganism, which has become inconsistent with the higher ideal of God. This history exhibits the influence of the divine spirit—an influence exerted with all the strength of Almighty power acting in consistency with other attributes, and working in the hearts of a people held down by sin. It is, in short, the story of a nation, lifted little by little from the lowest condition of nomadism, and exhibiting at each stage of progress, the weaknesses and sins common to people at that stage of advancement."

We are compelled, therefore, to ask, Is not such a history prophetic? Has the end been attained? Does the development of this august conception cease where we have left it? Is no new chapter to be added? It seems to us inevitable that something must follow. Order should not issue in chaos, cause must have its effect, means must attain its end. The words of John Fiske are applicable here: "God is not like a child that builds a house of cards to blow it down again." The Old Testament, indeed, is incomplete, inexplicable, and unintelligible without the New Testament; the New Testament is incomplete, inexplicable, and unintelligible without the Old Testament. The one is preparatory, the other complementary; both are essential to a harmonious whole. We should not expect, therefore, our development of the idea of the Kingdom of God to close with the Prophet Malachi. Hence, we are prepared to inquire, What is the next step? For an answer, we must look elsewhere than to either the Old Testament or the New.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE NIGHT OF LEGALISM

BETWEEN the death of Malachi and the birth of Jesus Christ, several centuries of history, replete with interest and significance, but unrecorded in the pages of the Old Testament, intervened. Had we access to all the events of this period, they would be found of great importance to this study. Unfortunately, the period is not well known. During these centuries, however, there arose many, if not all, of the ideas, conceptions, and parties which formed the background of Jewish life in the time of our Lord, and which, passively and actively, waged incessant warfare against Jesus and the ideas He sought to inculcate. The Scribes, the Pharisees the Sadducees, the Essenes, the definite conception of a personal Messiah, and many of the familiar institutions of the New Testament are the offspring of this era. This period is rightly called "The Night of Legalism," and it witnessed the rise of what is commonly known as Judaism, which represents the latest and extra-Old Testament developments of Jewish ideas and conceptions. Let us now note some of the tendencies of thought and life which characterized it, and which affect our study.

It would be both interesting and profitable to trace in detail the formative influences of this era but space does not permit us to do so. We shall have to content ourselves with the chief fruits of the period, the fruits of life and thought that bear upon the idea of the Kingdom of God. We shall be concerned for the most part with the Scribes and Pharisees, and the tendencies which they represent, and with the marked development of the conception of the Kingdom of God and its King.

The Babylonian Exile, as may be supposed, had influenced the Jews strongly and in many directions. One effect of this experience was to develop in the remnant of the exiles who re-

maintained faithful to Jehovah and the Holy City an unprecedented devotion to their ancestral religion. Indeed every custom, reminiscent of the former life, was assiduously observed; prayer must be offered with the face toward Jerusalem; the Sabbath, the rite of circumcision, and fasting, assumed increased importance. In every way the ancient faith and practices were stressed. In thus emphasizing and safe-guarding their religion, the Jews were obeying a rational impulse. They felt fully and keenly that the humiliation of the exile was a deserved punishment for their disobedience to God's law, their failure to be God's Kingdom. Hence the only way to regain and to retain the favor of their jealous God was by scrupulous devotion to, and exact compliance with, all the requirements of His law. Consequently, while every detail of the law would be highly valued, especial stress and emphasis would be placed upon those points of the law in which Israel had been remiss in the past.<sup>1</sup> It thus happened that the very essence of Judaism, i. e., the religion of the Jews after the Babylonian exile, was a slavish adherence to the letter of the law.

Accompanying this tendency to exalt the law, we find another tendency of far-reaching import. Persons were needed to collect, edit, and preserve the sacred books. This caused the rise of the literary class known to us as the Scribes. The Scribes, however, were not only to study and to edit the sacred literature, force of circumstances compelled them to become the law's interpreters and expounders. Consequently, in the Scribes we have the teachers and preachers of the time. They were the successors of the prophets of an earlier era. From the earliest period of their history, the influence of the Scribes increased steadily, until, in process of time, they became the powerful and arrogant leaders of Jewish thought and opinion. Soon they were organized into bands or guilds for the furtherance of their work. Indeed, they were the first to inaugurate the movement for the general education of the Jewish masses. And it must be remembered that their aim was

<sup>1</sup> Schurer says, in speaking of this tendency: "Its every requirement was a requirement of God from His people; its most scrupulous observance was, therefore, a religious duty; nay, the supreme, and in truth the sole religious duty. The whole piety of the Israelite consisted in obeying with fear and trembling, with all the zeal of an anxious conscience, the law given him by God in all its particulars."

not primarily intellectual but practical: to influence their brethren to practice the law. In fact, by the strenuous efforts of the Scribes, the entire Jewish people became thoroughly acquainted with the details, requirements, and minutiae of the law, and of the law as interpreted and applied by them. In this endeavor they were greatly assisted by the synagogue, another outgrowth of this era.

While the Scribes were perfectly honest in their purposes, they availed themselves of a method which bore within itself the seeds of death, and which was most admirably adapted to defeat the very end they had in view—the preservation of the integrity and the purity of their ancestral religion. In interpreting the law and its requirements, the Scribes were not direct, forceful, and convincing; their method was not simple and natural, but forced, circuitous, and artificial; reminding us of much of the interpretation of the New Testament that has been current in past ages and in certain quarters. Their exegesis, indeed, consisted of a detailed and elaborate definition and exposition of each command of the law, and an application of these definitions to the needs of daily life by means of excessive “amplification, illustration, and embellishment.” The inevitable result of their method was a slavish literalism which often ignored the true meaning and intent of the law, and a heartless and senseless casuistry, which obscured the beauty and reasonableness of the inner spirit of the law.

The Pharisees, another interesting product of this era, were the body of Jews who claimed to live in accordance with the very letter of the law. They composed a party of orthodox Jews, who were more strict in their observance of the law than the great mass of their brethren, and who valued the law more highly than life itself. Little need be said in explanation of the close relationship of the Scribes and Pharisees, which is so evident on many pages of the New Testament, inasmuch as the interpreters of the law, and those who sought to live in accordance with the law, would be from the first very closely allied. They represented, in fact, the same mental tendency, and were animated by the same purpose—the exaltation of the law. The name, *Pharisaioi*, whence the word “Pharisees,” is derived from an Aramaic word, and means “the separated ones.” Whether this name was self-chosen and self-

applied, as some assert, or whether it was an opprobrious epithet bestowed by their opponents, it is impossible to say. However, the separation referred to was something more than that which characterized the ordinary Jew. The Pharisee was like his fellow-Jew in all points save one: he was not content with the strictest separation from the Gentiles, but sought to separate himself from the mass of his fellow-countrymen. And his reason was that the great mass of the people, either from disinclination or inability, did not comply with all the minute demands of the law, especially in matters of food and cleansings. Hence, in the minds of the Pharisees, they were unclean, and to escape the defilement likely to ensue from intercourse with them, the Pharisees avoided association with them as far as possible. Thus they were "the separated ones."

One would naturally suppose that such supercilious self-sufficiency would have rendered the Pharisees obnoxious to the people generally. Yet such was not the case. The Pharisees were the popular and influential party of Judaism—more influential in fact than the kings or the priests. The reasons for this have been succinctly summarized as follows: "They had more regard to the public than the Sadducees; they were milder as judges; they shared, and indeed nourished, the national hatred against the Romans; the doctrines they held and taught, their scrupulous observance of the law, and their outwardly strict and severe manner of life caused them to be revered as pattern Israelites."<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, the tendency of the party, and its fruits, were subversive of true religion. While the Pharisees might regard themselves as pre-eminent the embodiment of the Kingdom of God on earth they were in reality, as subsequent events were to prove, the chief hindrance to its establishment. Indeed, as a party they were proud, bigoted, and narrow; their religion was heartless and formal; they overlooked the inner demands of the law, and were occupied with outward compliance with the ceremonial demands of the law. They illustrate a perennial truth. Whenever the moral and ceremonial requirements of religion are found side by side, human nature always follows the line of least resistance, and gravitates in-

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Eaton, in "Hasting's Dictionary of the Bible," Art. "Pharisees."

evitably toward the ceremonial to the neglect of the moral. This is the ever-present and subtle danger in ritualism, although the devotees of ceremonial in religion are loth to admit it. Ceremonial is, in fact, at once the deadliest enemy of true religion, and the congenial friend of hypocrisy. It is for this reason also that the Priest is usually the enemy of religion, while the Prophet is religion's friend, for the Priest stands for a complex and a ceremonial religion, while the Prophet is the advocate of a simple and a heart-felt religion. Another fact of interest in connection with the Pharisees is that the whole Pharisaic legalism was a natural, logical, and consistent development of their idea of God as primarily a Law-giver and a Judge: hence the relation of the individual to God was a legal one. Jesus' idea of God, however, was expressed by the word "Father," and hence the inevitable substitution in His system of religion of the personal and filial for the legal relation to God, and the unavoidable conflict between the two types of religion.

A topic of paramount interest with the Pharisees was the Messianic ideas of their Scriptures; to these they devoted great attention, and especially as they felt more heavily the iron heel of Rome. This brings us to another fact of importance.<sup>1</sup>

It was during this period, indeed, that the Messianic Hope—the hope of the coming Kingdom of God and the Ideal King—received its greatest development. Especially did the Messianic Hope concentrate itself in the conception of a personal Messiah.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Professor W. R. Smith says: "The scribes, who, in this period, took the place of the prophets as the leaders of religious thought, were mainly busied with the law; but no religion can subsist on mere law; and the systematization of the prophetic hopes and of those more ideal parts of the other sacred literature, which, because ideal and dis severed from the present, were now set in one line with the prophecies, went on, side by side, with the systematization of the law, by means of a harmonious exegesis, which sought to gather up every prophetic image in one grand panorama of *the issues of Israel's and the world's history*."

<sup>2</sup> Let us bear in mind that the expression, "Messianic Prophecy," with which we are familiar, may be used in two senses. The expression may embrace all that pertains to the Kingdom of God and its consummation; it may also be used with regard to a person—the Messiah who "is, not always, but often, a commanding figure in this perfect condition of the kingdom." To the average person to-day, the expression signifies the latter and not the former sense;



While the Old Testament gives us the cream of the Jewish literature which arose before the Christian Era, it by no means exhausts it. The Messianic conception, indeed, was kept alive and developed remarkably in the *Apocryphal* and *Apocalyptic* Books which arose during this period. In fact, the Messianic idea, both in its wider and narrower sense, received its greatest development in the pages of this literature in the last two centuries before Christ.

The allusions are somewhat scant in the Apocryphal Books, but two possible references to the expected personal deliverer are important. "Until there should come a prophet to give an answer concerning them" (1 Mac. 4:46); "The Jews and the priests were well pleased that Simon should be their leader and high priest forever, until there should arise a faithful prophet" (R. V. 1 Mac. 14:41). The independence of the Maccabean age was rather unfavorable to the Messianic Hope, and explains the few allusions to it.<sup>1</sup>

When we come to the Apocalyptic Books, however, we find abundant evidence of this hope. In the Sibylline Books,

and it is only with difficulty that the mind can be brought to see that the former is the earlier and the preponderating sense in the Old Testament. To exalt the later to the disparagement of the earlier is to mistake the fundamental intent and content of Messianic Prophecy. The burden and theme of Hebrew prophecy, in fact, is the Kingdom of God; it is also the burden and theme of that literature which Israelitish history and prophecy combined to produce.

Yet we would not minimize the idea of the coming king—the "Messiah," as he came to be called. It is apparent, however, that the idea was a subordinate one, for some of the prophets, both before and during the Exile, as Nahum, Zephaniah, and Habakkuk, made no reference to the future king. The conception which was born in the time of the Monarchy seems, in fact, to be lost in the time of the Exile. During this period, and for some time afterward, the future of the people is the all-important subject—not the future king. Indeed, after the Exile, the prophets Haggai and Zechariah voiced the opinion that as soon as the Temple was completed Jehovah Himself would come and found a Universal Kingdom. Before many years have passed, however, the conception of the king to come of David's royal line becomes the prominent feature of the Messianic expectation. How he was conceived of, and how the character of the Kingdom of God was viewed, we shall soon see.

<sup>1</sup> The reader might consult with profit 2 Mac. 2:18; Tobit 13:10-14; 1 Mac. 2:57; Judith 16:17.

which are predictions in the form of poetry, and are fashioned after the heathen oracles, we find an elucidation of the Messianic Hope in its larger sense; mention of the Messianic King is only made at the outset. The salient ideas are these: God will send a king from the East, who, taking vengeance on his adversaries, will eventually bring prosperity and peace. The faithful Israelites will live in happiness and quiet; while the heathen, aware of Israel's prosperity, will learn to praise Israel's God, to send gifts to His Holy Temple, and even to adopt the law. Thus will the God-sent King be the instrument of the establishment of God's universal kingdom, in which the Law shall be accepted and exalted. The name "Messiah," however, is not used.

Next comes the Book of Enoch. This Book was well known in the time of Jesus, and it belongs to the two centuries immediately before Christ. In the Similitudes, Chapters 37-70, there is a unique and well-developed doctrine of a personal Messiah. We read that suddenly the Head of Days will come, and with Him the Son of Man; there will be a resurrection of all Israel while all judgment is given into the hands of the Son of Man, who will execute judgment according to man's several deeds. All sin will be rooted out from the earth, the earth itself will be transformed, and the righteous enjoy the bliss of paradise. Here we notice that "the Messiah exists from the beginning (48:2); he sits on the throne of God (45:3; 47:3), and possesses universal dominion (62:6); and all judgment is committed unto him (69:27)." This book exerted a vast influence upon Jewish literature; in fact, it is next to Daniel in favor, authority, and importance in the age of which we write. Its influence upon the New Testament is very marked, and is illustrated both in "doctrine and in diction." It is regarded by many as the historical source of the New Testament designation of Our Lord as the "Son of Man."

Decidedly illustrative of the ideas of the coming kingdom and king is the so-called "Psalter of Solomon," a production of the years between 70 and 40 B. C. This work was born in the age which witnessed the subjugation of Palestine to the Roman power by Pompey, and it breathes the desire of every devout and patriotic Jew for the speedy coming of the Davidic

King, who should end the oppression of the foreign nation, and prove the successful opponent of unrighteousness and heathenism. Pharisaic thought and aspiration confront us on every hand. Here, to quote the words of Schurer, "We meet with the Messianic King depicted in sharper outlines and fuller colors in the *Psalterium Solomonis*."<sup>1</sup>

In the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan, which are paraphrases or free translations of the Pentateuch and the Prophets into the Aramaic tongue, many opinions and biblical interpretations which were current in the time of Our Lord are revealed. Many passages of the Old Testament are interpreted in a Messianic sense. For instance, the word "Shiloh" of Genesis 49:10 is applied to the personal Messiah, and we read: "The wielder of power shall not pass away from the house of Judah, nor the scribe from his sons' sons forever until that the anointed one come to whom belongs the kingdom and to him shall the people submit themselves." This interpretation, far-fetched

<sup>1</sup> Speaking of the author of this book, Schurer says: "He hopes that God will raise up a prince of the house of David to rule over Israel, to crush their enemies, and to cleanse Jerusalem from the heathen. (17:23-27.) He will gather a holy people, and will judge the tribes of the nation, and not suffer unrighteousness in their midst; he will divide them in the land according to their tribes, and no stranger shall dwell among them (17:28-31). The heathen nations will serve him, and will come to Jerusalem, to bring the wearied children of Israel as gifts, and to see the glory of the Lord. He is a righteous king, and one taught of God (17:32-35). And there is no unrighteousness in his days, for all are saints. And their king is the Lord's anointed. He will not place his trust in horse or rider. For the Lord Himself is his King. And he will strike the earth with the word of his mouth forever (17:36-39). He will bless the people of the Lord with wisdom; and he is pure from sin; and he will rule over a great people, and not be weak. For God makes him strong by His Holy Spirit. He will lead them all in holiness, and there is no pride among them (17:40-46). This is the beauty of the King of Israel. Happy are they who are born in his days (17:47-51). The writer expects, as it appears, not Godly kings in general of David's house, but a single Messiah endowed by God with miraculous powers, pure from sin and holy (17:41-46), whom God has made wise and powerful by the Holy Spirit (17:2), and who therefore strikes his enemies not with external weapons, but with the word of his mouth (17:39 after Isa. 11:4). *He is, however, notwithstanding such idealism, represented as quite a worldly ruler, as an actual king of Israel*" ("The Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ," Div. II, Vol. II, p. 142).



and unreal as it is, was the popular interpretation in the time of Jesus (cf. St. Jn. 1:19, 6:14, 7:31). Other examples might be cited. Perhaps it is not an exaggeration to say that much of the antagonism exhibited by many Christians toward Higher Criticism, and the Higher Critic, is due to the love of supposed orthodoxy for the Targum misinterpretation of the Old Testament Scriptures, whereas the Higher Critic is really contending for the truth of the Scriptures when shorn of Jewish and Christian perversions.

Interesting also in its bearing upon the Messianic Hope is the "*Assumptio Mosis*." This book probably dates in the period from 4 B. C. to 30 A. D. Here the Kingdom of God is to be established by God Himself, and there is no mention of the Messianic King. The Messianic Hope is, however, a glowing one. After describing a time of great trouble, the author says: "Then will his kingdom appear among all creatures, and the devil will have an end, and sorrow will disappear with him. Then will the Heavenly One arise from the seat of his kingdom, and will come from his holy habitation with wrath and anger for his children's sake, and the earth will tremble to its ends, and the high mountains be lowered, and the hills fall. The sun will give no light, and the moon be changed into blood, and the stars fall into confusion. And the sea will retreat to the abyss, and the waterspings fail, and the rivers be dried up. Then will the most High God, the alone Eternal, come forth to chastise the heathen, and to destroy all idols. Then wilt thou be happy, O Israel, and will tread upon the neck and wings of the eagle. And God will exalt thee and make thee soar to the firmament, and thou wilt thence look down upon thine enemies on earth, and shalt see them and rejoice, and give thanks, and acknowledge thy Creator."

It is necessary to mention only one other writing, namely the *Book of Jubilees*. This book is of great value in showing the popular idea of the law in the Messianic Kingdom. The contents of the book are claimed to be a revelation to Moses on Mt. Sinai, and the author endeavors to "carry the Jewish cultus back into the patriarchal or even pre-Adamite period." Here too is found a glowing Messianic expectation. Because it adds nothing of moment to the picture already sketched, we

do not quote it. Its insistence upon the longevity of mankind in the Messianic Kingdom, however, upon freedom from old age and weariness of life, and its exultant exaltation of Israel to a proud position of world empire are noteworthy.

From our hurried sketch of the Messianic Expectation two things must have impressed the reader: First, in marked contrast to the extreme rigidity of the scribal interpretation of the law, the interpretation of the Messianic Hope allowed the play of human fancy to a marked degree. If we look for a conception harmonious in all its details, we shall look in vain. While fundamentally the conception is the same, its amplification presents varying features, as we shall see in a moment. Secondly, the idea so beautifully elaborated in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, of the establishment of the Kingdom of God only at the cost of and by means of suffering plays but little part in the conception. It is most remarkable that an idea so striking and so original should have had such slight effect upon subsequent Jewish thought. Such an idea was apparently foreign to the Jewish mind in the time of Our Lord, and it remained for the Carpenter of Galilee to harmonize the two apparently antagonistic ideas of the Old Testament—that of the Davidic King and the Suffering Servant of the Lord. Having taken a rapid historical survey of the Messianic Hope, let us conclude by presenting in summary the integral factors of the Messianic Expectation as they existed in the mind of the Jewish populace in the time of Christ.

Almost without exception, an era of perplexity and trouble was thought of as the prelude to the Messiah's advent. Dire omens on earth, in the sky, and in the sea would announce the period. Elijah, the prophet, would return to prepare the Messiah's way (Mal. 3:23-24). Others looked for "the prophet like Moses" (Deut. 18:15); others awaited Jeremiah or some of the prophets to appear as heralds of the Messiah (St. Mt. 16:14). After the appearance of the herald, the Messiah Himself was to appear and dethrone the powers of the world (Book of Enoch; Sibyll. 111. 652-656; Ps. Solom. 17:24, 26, 27, etc). The time of the Messiah's coming was conditional upon the repentance of Israel, and their faithful observance of the law. He was to come *suddenly*, and from Bethlehem, where he would live in quiet and obscurity until the time of his appearing drew

near, when he would issue suddenly from concealment, and prove his Messiahship to all by numerous miracles (St. Jno. 7:27; St. Mt. 11:14; St. Lu. 7:22). Upon his appearance, the world-powers would gather together against him (Sibyll. 663, Enoch 90:16 etc.). This attack was led, according to the belief of some, by an arch-opponent of the Messiah—an "Antichrist" (St. Jno. 1:18-22; 4:2; 11 St. Jno. 7; 11 Thess. 2; Rev. 13). Notwithstanding their apparent strength, the powers will be overwhelmed. The details of this destruction and its method are variously described in the Apocalyptic Literature and in the Targums. The Messianic Kingdom will then have its seat in the Holy Land, with Jerusalem as its capital; the city will be cleansed of the heathen (Ps. Sol. 17:25, 33), and the Jews who are scattered throughout the world will return to Palestine. In the Psalter of Solomon they are gathered by the Messiah.

Then, with a reunited people, will God's Kingdom be established. The Messiah King will be at the head of the Kingdom, but God Himself will be the ruler of the Kingdom. To quote Schurer again: "With the setting up of this kingdom, the idea of God's kingship over Israel becomes full truth and reality." It is for this reason that the Messianic Kingdom is called "The Kingdom of God" or "The Kingdom of Heaven." This phrase, it is true, cannot be found in the Old Testament, but it abounds in the New Testament, and represents the fundamental and omnipresent idea of the Old—the sovereignty of God.

In the thought of some, the heathen, impressed by the prosperity and peace of Israel, will come of their own accord, acknowledge Jehovah, and walk after His laws (Sibyll. 111, 698, 726). With others, the power of the Messiah was to be the compelling force. But, whatever the method, the Messianic period was conceived of as a period of surpassing blessings. Joy, peace, health, and prosperity would be the supreme characteristics. All unrighteousness will be cast out, the Temple and the Law will assume unwonted splendor. Even the dead of Israel will rise to share in this enjoyment.

The most common title of the coming King was "the Anointed," "the Messiah." The expression "Son of Man" is applied to him only in the Book of Enoch. As the *chosen* of God, he is

sometimes called the "Elect," and "the Son of God." By all, he was thought of as a descendant of David (Isa. 11:1, 10; Jer. 23:5, 30:9, 33:15, 17:22), hence a universal title accorded to him was "Son of David" (Ps. Sol. 17:5, 23; the New Testament); and as a descendant of David, he was to be born in David's city—Bethlehem (Micah 5:1; St. Mt. 2:5; St. Jno. 7:41-42). Two views were entertained of the Messiah's personality. In the Book of Enoch, the pre-existence of the Messiah is asserted, and the supernatural element is generally conspicuous. This is, however, the exceptional view. The common belief was in a *human* Messiah (especially in the Psalms of Solomon), but nevertheless a Messiah of a high order and one greatly endowed with supernatural gifts and graces of God. There is nothing, however, in the current belief of the age which approaches the Christian doctrine of Jesus as the Son of God by *nature*.

While many thought of the Messiah's Kingdom as everlasting (Sibyll. 111, 766; Ps. Sol. 17:4 etc.), basing their belief upon Old Testament passages, some regarded the Kingdom as of temporary duration. In the course of time, it would give way to a Kingdom of greater happiness in eternity. The world was also to be made new (Isa. 65:17, cf. St. Mt. 19:28, etc.). Some fancied that this renovation of the world would characterize the beginning of the Messiah's Kingdom; others, that it would come at its conclusion. A resurrection of the dead was also looked for. Those now dead were thought of as separated in an intermediate state, and enjoying there a preliminary happiness or undergoing torment. Some held that only the righteous rose to the joy of the Messianic reign; others held that there was a general resurrection to judgment. The former was the earlier belief, and it made the resurrection synonymous with the commencement of the Messianic age. Another view postponed the resurrection until the close of that age. Men would be judged according to their deeds, hence *heavenly books* are kept and these will determine the sentence (Enoch 48:7-8; Book of Jubilees). The ungodly are cast into Gehenna, and are punished everlastingly. Yet with some there is the idea of a temporary punishment—a purgatory. The Righteous are taken to Paradise.

Amidst this variation in detail, it is easy to detect the central

and salient features. The coming King was to restore the national independence of Israel, was to subdue the nations of the earth and enthrone the Scribal Law. Into this world of truth and error, of fact and fiction, of Jewish Apocalyptic and Legalism, was Jesus of Nazareth born.

## CHAPTER V

### JESUS' IDEA OF THE KINGDOM

THAT the era of the "Night of Legalism" marked a sad falling away from the Old Testament conceptions generally, and especially from the conception of the Kingdom of God, is abundantly evident. Many events, indeed, had served to accentuate the temporal and material aspects of the Kingdom. The idea fostered during this period, in fact, was that of a worldly and political kingdom, composed of God's Chosen People, who were related to the Gentile world only through triumph and conquest. Thus the Kingdom was conceived of as primarily national in extent. The popular idea in our Lord's day, indeed, was of a materialistic, a political and a worldly Kingdom, coterminous and coextensive with the Jews. And to membership in this Kingdom, every Jew, by virtue of his descent from Abraham, had a just and inherent claim. The idea of the coming King was equally materialistic, worldly and political. Thus the entire Jewish mind was occupied with a dream of vast exaltation and splendor for the nation; the King must of necessity be similarly great and splendid.<sup>1</sup>

This conception reigned generally triumphant. It was pleas-

<sup>1</sup>Dr. Sanday thus summarizes the popular view: "The contemporaries of Jesus, when they spoke of the 'Kingdom of God,' thought chiefly of an empire contrasted with the great world empires, more particularly the Roman, which galled them at the moment. And the two features which caught their imagination most were the throwing off of the hated yoke, and the transference of supremacy from the heathen to Israel. This was to be brought about by a catastrophe which was to close the existing order of things, and which, therefore, took a shape that was eschatological." This conception savored far more of the present world than of the heavenly. Events, however—the Captivity, and the disasters subsequent—had stamped this idea of the King and the Kingdom indelibly upon the hearts of the people. In consequence, it was, as we have seen, the conception of later Jewish Literature, and of the Jews in the New Testament.



ing, captivating, in accordance with the aspirations and ambitions of fallen human nature, appealed to wounded pride and vanity, and promised vengeance upon the hated foes of the Jews, who had so often in the past, and who were even then humiliating and oppressing them. While the prophetic view, with its more spiritual and universal aspect, and its idea of a Suffering King or People, would be unpleasant in the extreme to a nation enamoured of worldly ideals. In fact, the prophetic conception was for the most part forgotten and obsolete; yet it was kept alive by a comparatively few humble and obscure persons, whose vision of things unseen and eternal was not entirely lost in the vision of things seen and temporal. Such were probably the aged Simeon and Anna of our Lord's time.<sup>1</sup>

It was to such a people, in such a condition, and nourished by such an ideal and hope, that after the silence of centuries, John the Baptist appeared, proclaiming with startling effectiveness that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand, and bidding the nation, Repent! We may imagine readily the sensation created, the hope enkindled, and the inquiry awakened. Day at length seemed about to dawn. The air itself was instinct with expectancy. And what was the result? The startling proclamation, the sudden appearance, and the strange figure shook the nation to its very depths. We are not surprised to learn that, "Then went out to him Jerusalem, and

<sup>1</sup> The hope of this element in Israel may be expressed in the words "That we being delivered from the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life" (St. Luke 1:74). That there were many pious households and humble hearts in which the higher and nobler hopes of Israel were silently cherished is most likely, but they were, as a rule, far removed from the sphere of influence and publicity. Then, as now, the truest and the simplest religion is away from the centers of ecclesiasticism and the turmoil of the world. The hotbeds of life, indeed, secular and religious, have never produced the choicest flowers of manhood or of character. Simplicity of life alone begets intensity of faith and nobility of conduct. Such a household, perhaps, was the home of Joseph of Nazareth. Speaking generally, however, the prophetic conception had vanished from the hearts and the lives of men. It was, apparently, a thing of the past, and had been entirely superseded by the popular view of a material and political kingdom. This the Jewish people were ever more and more eagerly expecting, especially as they increasingly felt the iron heel of Imperial Rome.

all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan" (St. Mt. 3:5). The nation was anxious, indeed, to learn more from the wild prophet of the desert. But what did they hear? Did John voice the popular ideal of the Kingdom? Was his vision that of the populace? Or did he rediscover the long forgotten and unpleasant prophetic idea? It suffices to say that John was a prophet in every fiber of his being. In him we have the "Elijah," the messenger to prepare the way for the Kingdom. Not Elijah risen from the dead, but a prophet, as our Lord declared (St. Mt. 11:9, 10) of the spirit and power of Elijah, to whom Malachi had referred centuries before. It has been remarked, and it is true, that in idea and development the New Testament begins at the point at which the Old Testament closed. Matthew is the logical successor of Malachi. John the Baptist is the complement of Malachi. The intervening centuries have contributed nothing apparently, and we resume our thread where we left it, without losing aught.

With John, indeed, the prophetic conception grew once more into power. The popular conception of the Kingdom was distinctly challenged. John emphasized the moral and spiritual aspect, and hinted at the universal character of the Kingdom of God. He was in consequence at war with his time. The strong, bold and uncompromising nature of the man, however, compelled him to strike blows without fear and without hesitation, which shattered completely the extreme complacency of his age. Yet John was emphatically the child of his time: "for a man belongs to his age and race even when he reacts against his age and race." Especially with the Baptist do we find the prophetic doctrine of "the remnant" more clearly taught. In the face of the popular Jewish fallacy that mere Abrahamic descent entitled to membership in the Kingdom of God, John demanded of the Jews themselves, repentance, or a change of heart and mind, and the fruit of repentance in an altered life. He declared that the nation would be sifted, and that the Kingdom would belong only to the purified remnant, "the wheat" from which "the chaff" had been winnowed; and further that the Kingdom would not lack for members, for God could raise up children to Abraham from the very stones which the Jews might be inclined to tread under foot.



The prophet's estimate of the religious leaders of his day may be found in his characterization of the Pharisees and the Sadducees as the "offspring of vipers," or "children of the devil"; for such is really the significance of the phrase, the viper being a common Jewish symbol for Satan. After a study of the Pharisees and the Sadducees we can appreciate the intensity of the prophet's burning words: "O generation of vipers, who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance" (St. Mt. 3:7-8). With John, indeed, the coming Kingdom was to be primarily ethical and moral in character; hence the *nation* must repent. There was to be a baptism of the spirit and of fire. When the multitude, for instance, aroused and expectant, inquired, "What then must we do?" the answer came: "He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise" (St. Lu. 3:11). The publicans were exhorted to "exact no more than that which is appointed you;" and the soldiers were commanded to "Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages" (St. Lu. 3:13-14).

Thus John's view must have been doubly distasteful to the Jews, indicating, as it did, the inward and moral character of the Kingdom, and at the same time declaring that not all of the Jews would share in the Kingdom of God, but only those who were fit, while all vacancies would be filled by others. The great work of John, however, was not to disclose the nature of the Kingdom, but to act as the herald of the Kingdom and its King. This he did with eminent success, stirring the people to great activity, and awakening the conscience of the nation, while compelling the attention of his countrymen to the prophetic view of the Kingdom. His life and his speech were strenuous and hard: they could, however, have been nothing else in view of his time and place. The characterization of Monsieur Renan is most apt: "This giant in primitive Christianity, this eater of locusts and wild honey, this rugged redresser of wrongs, was the absinthe which prepared the lip for the sweetness of the Kingdom of God."

Having now traced the development of the Idea of the Kingdom or Rule of God, we come to our third subject for investigation: "The Significance attached to the expression—

'The Kingdom of God' or 'The Kingdom of Heaven' when used by Jesus." The theme of Jesus, as we have found, was the Kingdom of God. Taking up the cry of John the Baptist—"The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand"! Jesus began His ministry with the Gospel of the Kingdom of God (St. Mk. 1:15); the Gospel of the Kingdom was the entire burden of His teaching, and with further instruction in it, He closed His earthly intercourse with His Apostles. What then was Jesus' Idea of the Kingdom? What did He mean when He used this current and popular expression of His time?

Jesus of Nazareth could not have remained unaffected by the burning question of His day. His was a time, indeed, when all thoughtful Jews must commit themselves to some conception of the Kingdom. John had raised the question anew. That Jesus was profoundly interested in the subject, we gather from the words of St. Matthew: "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John to be baptized of him" (3:13). The voice of John had sounded to the remotest parts of Galilee; Jesus heard, and in thorough sympathy with John, came to his Baptism. The question which is a fruitful one with many expositors and theologians, as to why Jesus, Himself sinless, received the baptism of John which was unto repentance for sins, is really a tremendously insignificant one. For Jesus not to have submitted to the baptism of John, would have been inexplicable in view of His modest Personality, His sympathy and His age. The Kingdom must have His allegiance, no less than that of His countrymen. Bred, however, as He was, in the midst of Legalism and the Apocalyptic, what would be His idea of the Kingdom of God? Would He ally Himself with the popular conception? Or would He espouse the prophetic conception?

A great scholar of Germany, Bernhard Weiss, has maintained that Jesus was at different times imbued with both ideas. He contends that Jesus in the earlier years of His ministry, hoped and labored rather for the realization of the popular ideal, in which the nation as a whole should be concerned, and that only later in His ministry, and because of the insuperable difficulties which militated against the success of His early ideal, did He abandon it, and become an advocate of the inward and spiritual Kingdom in the hearts of men.

He further holds that this compulsory change constituted the greatest disappointment in the life of Jesus. While there is an undoubted development both in Jesus' view of the Kingdom, and in His teaching in regard to it, the development is legitimate and evolutionary and does not partake of the vacillating and unstable character suggested by Weiss. While this question will not be discussed fully here, because our view becomes apparent in the pages which follow, it may be well to say that the theory of Weiss seems but the spiritual blindness of a man intellectually great—an instance by no means infrequent in the scholarly world, where great intellectual ability is never the guarantee of spiritual vision. What then was Jesus' view? Although we cannot enter fully upon a discussion of Jesus' view of the Kingdom of God at this point, inasmuch as His view will be considered in detail in the succeeding pages, it will now suffice to say that Jesus took the highest prophetic view, and lifted it to an ever higher plane of thought as to the Kingdom's universality and spirituality. Hence His view was immeasurably removed from the popular ideal. A few reflections will convince of this before we proceed to a detailed study of the Kingdom as it is revealed in the teaching of Jesus.

The Temptation of Jesus which, occurring at the beginning of His ministry, and in fact constituting His inauguration, is the key to His after life and work, offers dramatic testimony to the distinctive character of Jesus' conception of the Kingdom of God and is worthy of thorough and intelligent study. Let us consider it somewhat in detail.<sup>1</sup>

At His Baptism, it had been revealed to Jesus apparently that He was none other than the Messiah, the Son of God. This knowledge, coming to the obscure, unknown, and humble

<sup>1</sup> St. Mark 1:12, 13, St. Matthew 4:1-11, and St. Luke 4:1-13, recount the Temptation, and place it in the forefront of the public Ministry. The account of St. Mark is cursory, while that of St. Matthew and St. Luke is more detailed. The latter agree substantially in the incidents recorded, except that the order of the second and third temptations is reversed. St. Matthew places the scene on the pinnacle of the Temple second, and the vision on the mountain top third, while St. Luke reverses this order, making the temptation on the pinnacle of the Temple third and last. The order given by St. Matthew is climacteric and far more dramatic than that of St. Luke; it is also more in accord with the parabolic genius of Jesus.

carpenter of Galilee, must have caused an intellectual and spiritual unrest into the intensity of which it is impossible for man to enter. The turmoil of the soul, no less than the presence of the Spirit, impelled Him to the wilderness of Judea, where the severity of nature's aspect well accorded with the severity and the isolation of His thought and spirit. Many questions had been raised, and they must be answered. What was the Messiah to do? What kind of Messiah was He to be? The powerless Galilean had just been clothed with supernatural power. (In fact, the fundamental presupposition of the Temptation is Jesus' possession of miraculous power.) But what was He to do with this power? How was it to be used? What did it all mean? These and similar questions must be met: hence, the wilderness. And hence, also—Satan! Death, it is said, loves a shining mark, and so does Satan. The very nearness of a man to Heaven makes him correspondingly near to Hell. The nobler the life, the greater the fall, the more terrible the effect, and the more strenuous the attack of Satan. The Devil is, indeed, an able General, and quick to note an advantage. So Satan now reasons: If the King of God's Kingdom can be defeated, the hosts of God will be demoralized. As yet, He is untried, untested. The wilderness is the fitting field. Now weak in body, and distracted in mind, as yet unsettled and undetermined, the opportune moment is at hand. The very logic of events demands Satan, and he comes.

Half sneeringly and tauntingly, he says: "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." The reasoning is, Surely God would not have His Messiah suffer from hunger, especially when He is clothed with supernatural power, and has but to speak the word. It was the eternal, the universal, and the democratic question of providing "bread and butter."<sup>1</sup> The stern necessities of life afford Satan his never-neglected opportunity. So it was then, so it is now. The temptation, indeed, was most adroit; plausible, reasonable and legitimate the suggestion seemed. If it was to selfishness, it was apparently to reasonable selfishness. Jesus, however, perceives the

<sup>1</sup> Satan, indeed, finds entrance into the hearts of more men through their daily bread, probably, than in any other way. Well may Jesus teach us to pray—"Father, give us this day our daily bread."

true significance of the temptation, despite its subtle disguise. The question was this: Would He, endowed with supernatural power, use it for His own ends and needs, as, for instance, by turning stones into bread to satisfy His hunger? Or would He use it only in behalf of others? Egoism and altruism were at war. The import lay even deeper than this, however. In reality, a contest was waging between the human and the semi-human. Was His life to be natural and human, or unnatural and thaumaturgic? Was He to appear to lead a *human* life, yet in the presence of need or danger fly for refuge to that realm of the superhuman and the supernatural into which He had recently been inducted? Had Jesus yielded, His life would have at once passed from the sphere of the tragic and the sublime, into that of the comic and the ridiculous. Yet Satan's mistake was the mistake of the majority of men, who place the things of the physical life before the things of the spiritual life. In this customary way he sought to seduce. Jesus' answer, however, was a crushing protest against this satanic fallacy: "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (See Deut. 8:3).

Altruism had won the victory, but it was in turn to become the source and the center of the next Temptation. Satan, taking Jesus to the Holy City, and placing Him upon some lofty height of the Temple, whispers: "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning thee: And in their hands, they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." Again the taunt, "If thou be the Son of God," and another apparently reasonable suggestion. We have seen that it was a current belief among the Jews, that when the Messiah came, he was to come *suddenly* from obscurity, and to attest his vocation by miracles. This temptation, then, was a request for a concession to the Messianic expectation of the day. Jesus knew that He was the Messiah. But the nation did not know Him as such. Credentials were seemingly essential. What more convincing evidence could there be than that proposed by Satan? To leap from the loftiest pinnacle of the nation's Temple, in the very center of the nation's life, and, through His relationship to God, alight unscathed—who could deny or dis-



pute such evidence? The nation would be dazzled, the invincibility of His cause proved, the allegiance of the people compelled, success ensured—and all, through a slight concession to the spectacular. And all this, again, without danger to Himself, inasmuch as God's "care for the pious in general" as set forth in Psalm 91:11-12 would be exercised toward Him, God's Son, in pre-eminent measure. Such was Satan's appeal.

But Jesus again sees the import of the suggestion, and replies, "On the other hand, It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God" (Deut. 6:16). That is—no question of God's protecting care was to be raised *unnecessarily*; God was not to be tried or tested without due cause; danger was not to be sought without adequate reason. That supernatural power which Jesus had declined to use for self, and had decided to use only for others, He now declines to use even for the benefit of others in an ill-advised, illegitimate and spectacular way. Had He yielded, verily the flood gates of the extraordinary and the marvelous would have been opened and Jesus, once entering upon such a course, would not have known where to stop. The Kingdom of God would have been won, if won at all, by the spectacular. Reminiscent of this temptation are those incidents in which Our Lord was asked subsequently for a sign, as for instance St. Mk. 8:11-13 cf. 31-38. Jesus, however, would not be a superlative thaumaturgist or Wonder-Worker. He preferred the pathway of the unostentatious. It is by no means pleasing to reflect that much of Christianity's machinery to-day in both the Protestant and Catholic worlds, is of the character rejected by the Master in the Second Temptation.

The last Temptation was Satan's trump-card, and it was played with masterful skill. Beaten at two points, Satan was now determined to overwhelm Jesus. "Again the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." The Jewish idea of the day, shared subsequently by many Christians, was "that the present age and world lay under the control (2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 6:12) of Satan as king of the present time or king of the present things." What Satan now possessed, Jesus desired for God—

the kingdoms of the world and all their resources. Jesus, indeed, dreamed a dream of Universal empire. Satan had detected this, and made it a point of attack. That empire might he His, that dream fulfilled, every blessing and joy to the world of which He had conceived, become actual, if He would only do homage to Satan. Jesus felt, too, as every man of ability feels, the possession of His power. He was supremely conscious of His unrivaled ability to rule. And now the opportunity had come to gain His end, and to fulfil His destiny. The Temptation, indeed, must have been terrible. It meant, apparently, the Kingdom of God without the Cross; the Crown without the Thorns. Verily—

"The devil hath power  
To assume a pleasing shape."

But here again the insight of Jesus is proof against the subtle suggestions of the insinuating Tempter. Jesus sees their import. The question was this, Would He, seeing the Kingdoms of the earth, and how they might be His, if He would listen to the dulcet voice of Satan, use His power in the adoption of worldly principles and methods? And what is this but the popular and political conception of the Kingdom and its King, appearing to Jesus, conscious of His personality and His power? Many had aspired to free the nation from its foreign yoke, and to gain for Israel the sovereignty of the world. There was Judas, the Galilean, who angered by the taking of a hateful census a few years before, the prelude to Roman taxation, had raised the standard of revolt, declaring that Israel should have no King but God. He had failed, but his party still remained. Jesus must have known of him and of them. Where Judas had failed, however, Jesus could succeed, because of His possession of supernatural power. Thus Satan uses the Apocalyptic conception of the Kingdom in connection with well-known movements of Jesus' day to appeal to Our Lord. The Devil, in fact, always speaks the language of the particular age. And success would he give if Jesus would only worship him. And what was the alternative? The Kingdom of God in the hearts of men of which Ezekiel and Jeremiah had dreamed; a Kingdom gained through no selfish use of power, through the adoption of no worldly principles and



methods, but by the quiet proclamation of the truth, by a love for men entailing keen and bitter anguish, and perhaps death at their hands. A Kingdom gained through listening to the still, small voice of God, rather than the subtle whisperings of the Tempter. The majestic sovereign of splendor and might of the popular view, is thus offset by the suffering King of the prophetic view. The triumph to be gained by force is offset by the conquest to be made by love. A like alternative had been presented to the first Adam, and we know his choice; it is now presented to the Second Adam: What will be His choice?

While Satan seemed to give much, in reality he would have given nothing, but would have gained everything. For, while Jesus would have ruled the kingdoms of the world, Satan would have ruled Jesus, and incalculable and irretrievable harm would have ensued to the world. Jesus would, forthwith, have become the prince of those to whom Mr. Lecky, in speaking of Marcus Aurelius, refers: "Despotic monarchs sincerely anxious to improve mankind are naturally led to endeavor, by acts of legislation, to force society into the paths which they believe to be good, and such men, acting under such motives, have sometimes been the scourges of mankind" (Hist. of European Morals. Vol. 1, p. 265). The Kingdom of God, however, as we have seen, demands freedom of the will and a willing obedience, not force and compulsion. This Jesus perceived, and Satan stood unmasked. Sharply and decisively comes the answer "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*" (Deut. 6:13 ff). Jesus would not be a temporal prince, but a spiritual King. The Devil's play had failed, and he "leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him."<sup>1</sup>

Thus the Temptation is the struggle in the mind of

<sup>1</sup> St. Luke says "he departed from him *for a season*." In fact, Satan, throughout Jesus' entire career, was continually and persistently pressing upon Him the ideas and aspirations which had assumed such tangible shape in the Temptation of the Wilderness. St. Peter himself, protesting after the confession at Cæsarea Philippi against the self-announced sufferings and death of Jesus as unworthy of the Messianic King, is rebuked by Our Lord in almost the very words formerly addressed to the Devil—"Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men" (St. Mk. 8:33 cf. 34-37). Again, when,

Christ between the spiritual and the temporal conceptions of the Kingdom. We speak of the Temptation: let us bear in mind that "temptation" really means a trial or a testing; the idea of sin is not necessarily involved. In the Temptation of Jesus, the trial or test was this—Would Jesus live for the outer or the inner life? The conflict was between the outer and the inner worlds. The significance of the Temptation, however, is the same whether we view it as an actual external event, or as an inward and mental struggle. For our part, the account of the Temptation is not history or external fact at all; it is rather the parabolic, pictorial illustration of an inward and historic conflict—the conflict between Jewish Apocalyptic and the Old Testament Scriptures.<sup>1</sup>

Emerging from the wilderness after the titanic struggle,

according to St. John 6:15, "Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone." This is but the recurrence of the suggestion made in the third temptation, pressing with such force that the Master seeks solitude for prayer and meditation. Jesus had gained a signal victory, but He was compelled to hold the ground gained by ceaseless effort.

<sup>1</sup>That Jesus, as the Messiah, should pass through such an experience is most reasonable, as we have seen. That He should summarize and recount to His disciples in vivid and pictorial way this experience is also to be expected. While the Temptation of Jesus is rightly regarded as prophetic, and typical of that which comes to every man, it must never be forgotten, as it is so generally forgotten, that it was of peculiar application to the Founder of the Kingdom of God in the first instance, and, after Him, to the future ambassadors of the Kingdom—the Apostles. Jesus Himself must have recounted this experience, whether an outward event or an inward struggle. And what could have been the motive? Surely not egotism or conceit! Rather was the motive didactic. The recital of the Temptation was Jesus' attempt to disillusion His disciples. It was a mighty protest against their Messianic ideas; His endeavor to show them the path which they must follow after Him. The idea is well set forth in the words subsequently spoken: "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (St. Mk. 8:34). As in the School of Jesus, so in the Divinity Schools of every land, the Temptation of Jesus should occupy the preëminent place. For Satan's temptation of Jesus is Satan's temptation of every minister of Christ; namely, to use his power and office simply as a means of gaining bread and butter; or to seek results along the line of the theatrical and the spectacular; or in the general adoption of worldly measures to

and again appearing to John the Baptist, Jesus is publicly proclaimed as the Messiah. John cries on two distinct occasions "Behold the Lamb of God!" (St. Jno. 1:29, 36). This is indeed a strange utterance from the Baptist. Shortly before, he had heralded a Messiah of iron-will and of invincible might, uprooting, overturning, destroying; now he cries, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." What did John mean? The Lamb in all literature "is the symbol of innocence and gentleness, as opposed to cunning and ferocity." Among the Jews again there was the well-known Paschal Lamb, and the Lamb of the daily sacrifice. The figure of the Lamb is also used by Isaiah and Jeremiah to refer to the Suffering Servant of Jehovah. That a reference to the Suffering Servant was intended by the last and greatest of the prophets is our opinion, although this does not exclude a possible reference to the lamb of the daily sacrifice, or the Paschal Lamb. And what phrase could more admirably, or more truly, describe Jesus after the decision made in the Temptation? Not the majestic King of the Apocalyptic dreams now, but the Suffering Servant of Jehovah—the patient preacher of God's truth, and sufferer for God's sake, *and so a King*. Thus we have for the first time, the conception of the Davidic King and the Suffering Servant of God of the Old Testament, united and applied to one person—the Messiah. It remained, in fact, for Jesus after centuries to harmonize the two apparently hopelessly contradictory conceptions; the Temptation was the scene and the ground of that reconciliation. To what we must attribute the marked change or development in John's thought of the Messiah, it is impossible to say. It may have been due to converse with Jesus Himself; or it may be referred to a flash of spiritual insight into the deeper meaning of the Old Testament vouchsafed by the Spirit of God. Yet whatever the source, the declaration stands; a lofty note was sounded, and it has not been lowered throughout the ages. Jesus was the Lamb of God: the Temptation had crowned Him such.

further the kingdom of Satan instead of the Kingdom of God. The temptation, indeed, discloses the fundamental principles underlying the ministerial life; it depicts the true ambassador of God. Were this done, fewer, indeed, in the ministerial world, both Protestant and Catholic, would be blind leaders of the blind, and dulcet-toned sycophants of Hell, who cry peace, when there is no peace.

This we see also, if we note what may be appropriately called The Inaugural Address of Christ. It was delivered in the synagogue at Nazareth, immediately after His return from the Jordan. Returning "in the power of the Spirit into Galilee," Jesus teaches in their synagogues. "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book and he gave it to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, *This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears*" (St. Lu. 4:16-21).

Whether St. Luke gives this address in its historical connection is a small matter; its position is at least logical, and it indicates Jesus' conception of the nature of the Kingdom. (The quotation is the well-known Messianic passage from Isaiah 61:1-2.) As soon, indeed, as we hear the address fall from the Master's lips, we know what His choice has been, and in what direction His work lies. He will be King through Kindness: His Kingdom be the grateful hearts of men. Indeed, the choice made, Christ never wavered, even though the shadow of Calvary already lay upon His brow. With a fidelity amazing, and a grasp, from the very first, of the basic principles necessary in the founding and maintenance of such a Kingdom as He had elected, that is most astounding, Jesus set about His task.

Other testimony to the distinctive character of Jesus' conception of the Kingdom also confronts us at the beginning of the public ministry. Let us glance hastily at two factors in it. Jesus was well aware that as a religious teacher, His attitude toward the old religion would be questioned from the beginning. Hence we find Him at the very outset stating His relationship to the old religion in the Sermon on the

Mount. "Think not that I am come to destroy the Law and the Prophets: I am come not to destroy, but to fulfil" (St. Mt. 5:17). Jesus here admits His indebtedness and relationship to the Older Religion, and defines His attitude toward it. He was not a destroyer but a *fulfiller*: His mission was to enlarge, to develop, to fill the Old Religion full of a new meaning and significance. Not one jot or tittle of the Old Law was to pass away until all had been fulfilled (St. Mt. 5:14). We note here a declaration of both dependence and independence. While led to expect some indebtedness to the former law, we are also led to expect some development, at once individual and distinctive. This truth applies equally to the conception of the Kingdom of God. If the Law and the Prophets were to be fulfilled, we would expect the development to extend to, and to include, so weighty a matter as the Prophetic conception of the Kingdom of God.

This truth is again clearly set forth, and as explicitly, in another pregnant but somewhat enigmatical utterance of Our Lord spoken at the outset of His career. "No man also seweth a piece of new cloth on an old garment: else the new piece that filleth it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse. And no man putteth new wine into old bottles: else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles" (St. Mk. 2:21-22).<sup>1</sup>

The disciples of John the Baptist and the Pharisees were fasting in accordance with established precedent; the disciples of Jesus were not fasting. Amazed, those fasting come to Jesus, and hold Him responsible, asking, "Why do the disciples of John, and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?" Jesus, applying to Himself the figure of the "Bridegroom" which had been applied to Him by John the Baptist, says: "Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them. And then shall they fast in those days." The meaning of this is obvious. A wedding is an occasion of festivity, not of fasting, the expression of mourning—"I, as the Messiah, the Bridegroom,

<sup>1</sup> This saying is also given in St. Mt. 9:14-17, and St. Luke 5:33-38.



am now with my disciples, 'the children of the bride-chamber,' my 'choicest and most trusted and beloved friends'; the wedding is on—why should they fast? Their fasting is impossible now; but presently, when the bridegroom shall be taken away, then will they fast, because mourning over his absence is natural, and fasting, the expression of their sorrow."

Thus Jesus lifted the idea of fasting to a plane of dignity unknown among the Jews. He removed fasting from the sphere of rote and rule, and made it the true embodiment of the inner feeling of the heart; not a mockery, but a reality. Even a considerable portion of the Christian Church has as yet been unable to understand this teaching. Then with that magnificent intellectual acumen which ever characterized Him, Jesus rises from a consideration of the specific to the general, of the concrete to the abstract. It is as though He said—"You ask—why my disciples do not fast? and you expect them to fast in the prescribed fashion. Don't make a sad mistake! You mustn't expect to take the new cloth of my teaching, and put it as a patch upon the old, well-worn garment of your religion, for it would only tear away from the old, and the rent between the two teachings, which is now bad, would become worse.

"Nor again, must you expect to pour the new wine of the spirit of my truth and teaching into the old decaying wineskins of your religion, such as fasting by rote—the form and ceremonial of Judaism; for the energizing, fermenting power of the new wine of my truth, would only burst the rotting wineskins of the old, and both the new wine, my truth, and the old wineskins, your Judaism, would be spoiled. No, 'new wine must be put into new bottles;' my truth must create its own ritual." Such was the meaning of Jesus. Failure to understand Him caused the strenuous efforts of the Judaizers of the early Church; it has also saddled the Christianity of our day with a large amount of ecclesiasticism, sacramentarianism, and formalism, borrowed from Judaism and heathenism, the outcome of the Church's endeavor to express the new truth of Christianity in the old forms and ideas of Judaism and Paganism. However, this teaching of Jesus leads us to look for something novel and supplementary in His doctrine. And here again Jesus fulfils a law of life. Every man who is to advance

his age, must be in sympathy with it, and yet in vision beyond it.

Other considerations might be adduced, but these suffice to show that Jesus' view of the Kingdom of God, while founded upon the prophetic view, was yet more universal in extent and spiritual in character than that of the noblest and sublimest prophecy. It was this marked and distinctively new element which justified Jesus in His proclamation of *The Kingdom of God*, in spite of all incipient and preparatory stages in the Kingdom's development. Truly, for the first time, do we have the Kingdom of God in its absolute, undimmed, and untarnished ideal and reality in the teaching and in the Person of Jesus Christ.

It now remains but to add that to this idea and ideal Jesus was wholly consecrated. Heinrich Heine has observed that, "We do not take possession of our ideas, but are possessed by them. They frighten us and force us into the arena, where, like gladiators, we must fight for them." This was emphatically true of Jesus of Nazareth; although the opposite was equally true of Him. While the idea of the Kingdom did possess Him in every fiber of His being, He possessed a mastery over the conception of the Kingdom, which only a profound study of His exposition of the subject can enable us to appreciate adequately. Jesus, indeed, lived on the heights. The mind of the peasant Carpenter of Nazareth had soared to the highest height of heaven, and there had seized the sublimest of conceptions. This conception was His life; in it He lived, and moved, and had His being. His constant endeavor was to translate this conception into terms of human thought and life. This conception was the Kingdom of God. Everything suggested it, and everywhere was it seen; even in the simplest things of life. Nature seemed to teem with it, and the associations of an apparently monotonous and prosaic daily routine to bespeak it. The seed, the sower, the leaven, the growing mustard tree, the fishermen with their nets, the busy merchantmen, the gaiety and custom of the marriage feast, the hiring of the laborers, the children dancing in the streets, alike suggested to the Man of Nazareth, the Kingdom of God. In every phase of life He saw the Kingdom mirrored and reflected. Whether He was in the simplicity of the humble home at Nazareth, or in the joyousness and freedom of the



happy days spent upon the hills about the provincial town, or during the occasional sojourns amid the attractions and allurements of the Holy City with its crowds and manifold interests, the thought of the Kingdom was His constant companion, more dear than aught else; so dear, in fact, that nothing could vie with it successfully or dispute its supremacy. Jesus, throughout His entire life, was a man of One idea; but that Idea, the most sublime, and the most comprehensive that has ever dawned upon the mind of man—an Idea, so splendid, august, and far-reaching, that men penetrate into its vastness with exceeding difficulty, and, when measurably the possessors of it, burst into an unfeigned confession of admiration and reverence. This Idea of Jesus of Nazareth is the subject of our study; a more worthy and more fascinating subject could no man have.

And now having discussed (1) The Meaning of the Phrase, "The Kingdom of God" or "The Kingdom of Heaven"; (2) The Origin and Development of the Idea embodied in the Phrases; and (3) The Significance attached to the Phrases when used by Jesus, let us proceed to study the latter in detail, as we shall find Jesus' conception revealed in His teaching. We shall consider this especially in relation to the prevailing and popular conception of the Kingdom held in Our Lord's day, and also in its bearing upon certain problems and needs of our own age. The divisions of our subject will be: "The Subjects of the Kingdom"; "The Kingdom's Method of Development"; "The World's Reception of the Kingdom"; "The Value of the Kingdom"; "The Alloy of the Kingdom"; "The Extent of the Kingdom"; "The Time of the Kingdom"; "The Church and The Kingdom"; "The Kingdom and The Supernatural"; and "The Vicegerent of the Kingdom."

## CHAPTER VI

### THE SUBJECTS OF THE KINGDOM

HOWEVER the view of the Kingdom of God which Jesus entertained might differ from the popular or the prophetic conception, and however the popular conception might diverge from the prophetic conception, the three were agreed in one essential point at least—namely, that on its human side there must be a visible manifestation or embodiment of the Kingdom. This fact is the more noteworthy in view of the idea of Jesus. While the Kingdom with Him was in its last analysis, submission and obedience to the will of God, at the same time it was to be tangible, visible, real—not a figment of the imagination, but a great and obvious reality. It must have members or subjects. Logically, there must be an outward expression of the inward spirit in the individual and an intimate association of those akin in principle and idea. Life, in fact, always tends to embodiment and seeks expression. It is necessary, therefore, to inquire concerning the subjects of the Kingdom of God. For the sake of clearness, we will consider the general theme under three heads or subdivisions:

I. How to become a subject of the Kingdom.

II. What characteristics entitle one to become a subject of the Kingdom.

III. The duty of the Kingdom's subjects.

Jesus laid down an explicit condition of entrance into His Kingdom and He made this condition imperative. The indispensable condition, indeed, is precisely what we would expect after our casual study of Jesus' idea of the Kingdom in the last chapter. It is imposed in St. Matthew 18:3, and is as follows: "Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." While the saying is simplicity itself, the meaning is profound and searching. The words mean

that in order to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, there must be on the part of the individual "a definite change of mind" and an absolute break with the past. The individual must turn himself about, for this is substantially the meaning of the Greek word *στρέφω*, and its compound—*επιστρέφω*, which is translated "be converted." The word involves the idea of a radical departure. What has seemed wisdom is now foolishness, and what has seemed foolishness is now seen to be the wisdom of life. One may realize more clearly the import of the figure, if he pictures to himself a man who is walking along a path—a path of his own selection; he is obeying his own will, following his own fancy: the path leads away from God. Suddenly there is a "right about face"; he turns and goes in an opposite direction. A change of mind and heart has come; the man begins to walk with God. This, indeed, is conversion.

And becoming like a little child refers to the submissive trustfulness, the ready dependence of the individual upon God. What is the most obvious characteristic of the small child? Is it not its utter dependence, its inability to do for itself, its need, and often its willingness to give itself into the hands of others? One might be tempted to select some other characteristic, but this is certainly the basal feature of the child-life, and that which most readily answers to the requirement of Jesus. Now this turning with God and readiness to be absolutely dependent upon Him, Jesus makes the *sine qua non* of entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven. The thought is best interpreted by the saying, "Not my will but thine be done, O Lord." Thus entrance into the Kingdom of God is absolutely conditioned upon willingness to obey God's will, to submit to His rule or sovereignty.

This drastic requirement is set forth by Our Lord in His earliest recorded teaching concerning the Kingdom of God according to the Gospel of St. John. We refer to the conversation held with Nicodemus. While the subject matter of this conversation is well known, it is not usually interpreted in the light of its historical context, but is made to serve the ends of theological dogmatizing. Let us study it historically, however. This Jew, it will be remembered, who came to Jesus by night, was a Pharisee (St. Jn. 3:1), a member of the Sanhedrin

(7:50), and in all probability a rich man. With the tact of the polished gentleman he begins his interview with Jesus with the language of compliment and appreciation. "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." Decisively, and even with the appearance of abruptness, Jesus replies, addressing Himself not so much to the remark of Nicodemus, as to what He knew to be in his mind: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, *except a man be born again*, he cannot see the kingdom of God."<sup>1</sup> Nicodemus, indeed, was fondly picturing the overthrow of Rome and the establishment of the temporal and the legal supremacy of Israel, in which every Jew as a Jew had an inalienable portion. Jesus, however, declares—except *any one* (no matter what his birth) shall be born again, or be born *from above* (as the word may be translated, and this idea we are compelled to include if we would fully understand the import of the new birth) he cannot see the Kingdom of God.<sup>2</sup> The meaning is that unless one undergoes a radical transformation of character—a transformation so distinctive and far-reaching as to be compared to being born again—he cannot see, or preferably *experience*, for that is what the word means, the Kingdom or rule of God.

This was certainly enigmatical language to the aristocratic Nicodemus. Not even long familiarity with the idea of the new birth, which proselytes to Judaism were said to experience in passing from the Gentile to the Jewish world, could lead him to imagine for an instant that a Jew must suffer a similar experience in entering the Kingdom of Heaven. Surprised, Nicodemus asks, "How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be

<sup>1</sup> While the account of his interview (St. Jn. 3:2 ff.) was "probably rehandled and condensed by the Evangelist," so that we do not have it in its entirety, yet from what is given we conclude that the paramount subject of Jewish expectation and discussion—"The Kingdom of God"—must have been uppermost in the mind of Nicodemus, although it is unexpressed in the narrative. And the view of membership in that Kingdom entertained by Nicodemus would be that of his fellow countrymen, namely, that the Kingdom belonged to every Jew by virtue of his birthright.

<sup>2</sup> Here, at the very outset of His public ministry, Jesus goes to the root of the whole matter, and sets forth the fundamental character of the Kingdom—spiritual versus material.

born?" Jesus does not leave him long in doubt, but replies in language which Nicodemus cannot fail to understand—"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of *the Spirit*, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." Here we notice that being "born again" is amplified into being born "of water and of the Spirit." Thus the new birth, apparently, is to consist of two parts. What these parts are, it is important to note.

Nicodemus was undoubtedly familiar with the idea of the Prophets that the advent of the Kingdom would witness the pouring out of God's Spirit upon all flesh. That Spirit, according to the Jewish mind, was to be given forthwith to every Jew. This belief, however, Jesus boldly controverts in the passage now before us. That is why He so explicitly calls the attention of Nicodemus to the universal need of being "born of water." Most important, indeed, is it to appreciate the relation of "water" to this new birth, for often an undue emphasis along magical and thaumaturgic lines is attached to the water of Baptism. Let us remember, however, that Nicodemus was a Pharisee, and that whatever of the stiff-necked and the stubborn had survived from the ancient Hebrews was concentrated in the Pharisees of Jesus' day. John, baptizing at the Jordan, had attracted multitudes to his baptism. Many were baptized of him, confessing their sins. The soldiers, the populace, even the publicans, were moved to repentance in view of the coming Kingdom. The one class, however, which felt no need of a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness was that of the Pharisees. Listening to John, they yet rejected him. "But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him" (St. Lu. 7:30). They lacked the one thing needful—repentance. "Born of water" on the lips of Jesus, therefore, established John's demand for repentance as the preeminent requisite for entrance into the Kingdom of God. The confident assumption of Nicodemus is thus rudely shattered. He learns that the proud and defiant Pharisee, who boasts of his virtues and thanks God that he is not like other men, must be transformed into the humble and suppliant Publican, who cries "God be merciful to me a sinner!" ere the Kingdom can be attained. He sees also that this is a universal requirement. For



the first time, he grasps the truth that the conditions of entrance into the Kingdom of God are both negative and positive—"born of water and of the spirit." A little reflection, however, would reveal that this order was rational, and also chronological. Before the Spirit can be poured out, there must be the receptive heart, and the receptive heart is the repentant heart. The negative must precede the positive; the human, the divine.<sup>1</sup> Thus Nicodemus was introduced to a new line of thought, and one extremely subversive of his convictions and his prejudices. Every man must become like a little child, if he would experience the sovereignty of God. Jesus, indeed, had wrought out this truth in His own experience in the Wilderness, and He makes it the indispensable condition for the subjects of the Kingdom throughout the ages.<sup>2</sup>

We will now consider what characteristics or qualifications entitle one to become a subject of the Kingdom. What were these qualifications as taught by Jesus? Let us turn to the Sermon on the Mount for our answer. There the character of the subject of the Kingdom is depicted and the essential qualifications for membership are set forth.<sup>3</sup> They are found in the Beatitudes or the opening words of this Sermon (St. Mt. 5:1-12). We read, for instance, "Blessed are the poor in Spirit: *for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*" "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: *for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*" Such are the first and the last of the Beatitudes. Those which intervene must be interpreted in harmony with these; for while "the kingdom of heaven" is not mentioned specifically in them, some variant of the Kingdom, or some blessing inherent in the possession of the Kingdom, is enumerated. We have simply different phases of the same truth.

<sup>1</sup> The positive and negative aspects of Baptism are well brought out in the Baptismal Offices of the Episcopal Prayer Book.

<sup>2</sup> That Jesus, although He fulfilled the baptism of John—the baptism of water by the baptism of the Spirit, as John foretold that He would—should have begun His ministry, and continued it for some time, by simply reiterating the cry of the Baptist, "Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!" is also emphatic proof of the stress laid by Him upon repentance.

<sup>3</sup> We shall appreciate more fully Jesus' teaching upon this subject if we pause for a moment to consider the significance of this Sermon. Interesting events occasioned its delivery. After Jesus' decision in the Wilderness and His entrance upon His lifework of

These Beatitudes, however, sound strangely indeed, when we recall the supreme Beatitude of Jesus' day: "Blessed is the Jew: for his is the Kingdom of Heaven," and some of the smug and complacent Beatitudes of more modern days, such as "Blessed is the Baptized: for his is the Kingdom of Heaven;" or "Blessed is the Churchmember: for his is the Kingdom of Heaven;" or, even, "Blessed is the Catholic: for his is the Kingdom of Heaven." There is evidently a difference of opinion between Jesus and His contemporaries, and many of His later followers, and in order to understand the mind of the Master, it will be necessary to note the several Beatitudes in detail, but briefly.<sup>1</sup>

gaining the sovereignty of the world for God through the patient proclamation of the truth, and suffering for love's sake, it became evident that such a herculean task could not be performed by one man, nor in one lifetime. Consequently, at the outset of His labors, He sought to reinforce His efforts by the appointment of the Twelve Apostles. "And he ordained twelve that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach" (St. Mk. 3:14). The selection of the Twelve, however, demanded their instruction. There had arisen the necessity and the opportunity for detailed teaching in regard to the Kingdom as He viewed it. What He had wrought out in the depth of His own consciousness must become the property of His disciples. The necessity and opportunity Jesus met with the Sermon on the Mount. Addressed to the Twelve, and also to the larger company of believers, the sermon has for its theme the topic ever dearest to Jesus' heart—The Kingdom of God: The Character and the Conduct of its Subjects. In St. Matthew's version of this discourse, some sayings which were not originally spoken on this occasion may be included. However, whether the version of St. Matthew or of St. Luke be adopted, there is abundant evidence of the unity of the discourse, its theme, and its development. The theme is enunciated in the opening words, i. e., in the Beatitudes. Those who regard the discourse as primarily a protest against the Pharisaic interpretation of the Law, or a defense against the Pharisaic charge that Jesus destroyed the Law and the Prophets, make a mistake, we think (St. Mt. 5:17-20). Jesus, viewing the Kingdom of God as primarily spiritual and personal, is endeavoring to set forth the ideal character of the subjects of the Kingdom, and the conduct in which that character expresses itself; while in giving such instruction He must necessarily warn against the current Pharisaic irreligion and defend Himself from the charge of being a revolutionist.

<sup>1</sup>The type of utterance disclosed in the Beatitudes is found in the Old Testament: "Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in the time of trouble" (Ps. 41:1 cf. 84:5-7; Isa. 30:18, 20, 32; I Ki. 8:15). Hence the type is borrowed by Jesus,



Each word, indeed, is replete with significance and first to challenge our attention is the term—"blessed."<sup>1</sup>

But who are thus blessed? First are "the poor in spirit"; but who are they?<sup>2</sup> "The poor in spirit" are those with open hearts and minds toward God; the humble, not the self-sufficient. And to these, says Jesus, belongs the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus, Himself, indeed has given us a vivid illustration of this spirit in a familiar parable. The publican, unwilling even to lift his eyes toward heaven, and crying "God be merciful to me a sinner!" is the immortal type of poverty of spirit.

and we must look for novelty in the content and not in the form. Yet here there is dependence upon the Old Testament, for the ideas and phrases are also borrowed largely. "The poor," "the mourners," "the meek," "the hungering and thirsting," "the merciful," "the pure in heart," "the peacemakers," "the persecuted," "the kingdom of heaven," "the comfort of the afflicted," "the inheriting of the earth," "the satisfaction of longing for righteousness and truth," "the seeing of God," and "the becoming sons of God," are conceptions and terms common to the older Scriptures, and to the Judaism of Jesus' day. The Beatitudes also consist of two clauses: the one expressing the condition, the other the result. The thought is that compliance with the condition of the first part brings the result of the second part.

<sup>1</sup> The Greek word so translated represents a Hebrew word, and comes to us with the Hebrew meaning. This word thinks of man as the object of blessing. When God is the subject of blessing, as in the sentence, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel!"—a different word is used. This marked distinction Jesus probably preserved in His teaching. The root from which this word is derived signified "to go straight," "to advance." Thus an unusual conception of "blessedness" is gained: it consists in the possession of something which makes one "go straight," or *prosper* in that sense. Hence in the "blessedness" of the Beatitudes there is a religious and ethical content.

<sup>2</sup> St. Luke identifies these, apparently, with the *poor* (6:20). St. Luke's version of the Beatitude is the probable original, and is not due to any tendency to unduly exalt poverty in itself. St. Matthew's version is due probably to a desire to guard the Gentile world from a materialistic interpretation, when the technical word "poor" was translated into Greek. This materialistic interpretation, as a matter of fact, was widespread in the Early, and also in the Medieval Church, in the idea that voluntary poverty was blessed. This is still the interpretation of many Roman Catholic expositors. The interpretation, however, is negated by the other Beatitudes, all of which, with one exception, deal with inner qualifications. The exception, however, deals with an external condition—persecution,

But again we read, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." A strange idea, but let us understand it. The Jew thought that with the coming of the Messianic Kingdom, perfect comfort and consolation would be given (Isa. 61:2; St. Lu. 2:15; 4:18; Rev. 21:4). Mourning, however, was then and it is now an ever-present fact of life. No one, indeed, escapes the experiences which entail mourning, although all strive to do so. Now this universal mourning, whatever its cause—and an inclusive, not an exclusive sense, is to be posited—brings its own blessing in the divine comfort administered. Such, at least, is the thought of Jesus. Of course, this is only appreciated by the spiritually minded. "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby" (Heb. 12:11). Nor is this relief only to be expected in the distant future? The Kingdom, or rule of God, with its revelation of the God who is a *Father*, speaks infinite peace to the mourning soul now. While the consciousness that mourning is but the keen-

which is superinduced by an inner qualification—righteousness. Now, this term, in the Jewish world, bore a technical meaning. With us, as among the ancient Gentiles, the word is used in an economic sense, and signifies, primarily, *poverty*. Among the Jews, however, the word was derived from the Hebrew *anah*, which meant to be humbled or abased. To the Jew, "the poor" was one deprived of his rights, the humbled and abased by oppression. Often these were the poor in an economic sense, yet the essential idea is that of ill-treatment. The term is used again and again by Prophets and Psalmists to denote those oppressed "at the hands of a high-handed and cruel aristocracy" (See Ps. 18-27, 9:12-18; 10:2, 9, 12; Isa. 61-1 and St. Lu. 4-18). From this usage, the word came to designate the poor who suffer—"the religious poor." Thence, "the poor" became the title of a party among the Jews in process of formation some years before the Exile, but which was united and consolidated during and after the return from the Captivity. This party, as we may infer from our previous study, embraced the devout and faithful Israelites, in contrast to "the worldly and indifferent." Hence, "the poor" signified "those who feared and sought after God." Professor Harnack, in speaking of this class, says: "Often too poor to pay even for the barest advantages of and privileges of public worship, oppressed, thrust aside, and unjustly treated, they could not raise their eyes to the Temple, but they looked to the God of Israel, and fervent prayers went up to Him: 'Watchman, what of the night?'"

edged chisel which, in the hands of God, is carving the cold marble of our individuality into the likeness of our great Exemplar Christ, who was perfected through suffering, is both a comfort and an inspiration. (Heb. 5:8, 12; 3:11). Much that is finest in life, indeed, is born of sorrow and sadness. Mourning, then, is a Christian duty and privilege; not, however, the mourning as of those who have no hope.

"All is in busy, stirring, stormy motion,  
 And many a cloud drifts by, and none sojourns."  
 "The worse for us;  
 He that lacks time to mourn, lacks time to mend,  
 Eternity mourns that. 'Tis an ill cure  
 For life's worst ills to have no time to feel them.  
 Where sorrow's held intrusive and turned out,  
 There wisdom will not enter, nor true power,  
 Nor aught that dignifies humanity."

We also hear, "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." Now meekness is the absence of guile, and of the spirit of the earth.<sup>1</sup> It is closely akin to poverty of spirit. In fact, poverty of spirit begets meekness or tractableness toward God. And, of course, this in turn manifests itself toward men in an attitude of approachableness, gentleness, and love. It is the meek, for instance, who, bowing the head in submission, place their lives in God's hands, cooperate with Him in His purposes for the individual and the world; who, in sacrificing all, gain all. And it is the meek who really inherit the earth, says Jesus, or enter into possession of all that God has to give.

He also tells us that "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Here, as in all of the Beatitudes, the thought is noble, if somewhat perplexing. In this case, the heart, Jesus declares, that knows a craving for the right, akin in the intensity of its pangs to the physical need expressed under the terms "hunger" and "thirst," is the human heart that will be satisfied. This is God's world, Jesus means, and God and the right will triumph.

<sup>1</sup> Meekness, in the Beatitudes, looks rather toward God than toward men, following the Hebrew and not the Greek usage, which knew nothing of meekness toward God, but only of meekness toward men.

He, who recognizing that man does not live by bread alone, turns to God to satisfy his hunger for the righteousness he craves, will be filled and satisfied in the knowledge that more and more God and the right are triumphing in individual lives, and in the collective life of the world. While those who hunger for evil are but accentuating and intensifying a craving which can never be satisfied, but must eventually rival in keenness and insatiability the veritable pangs of the nethermost hell.

Another utterance is: "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." To be merciful is both to possess the spirit of compassion, and to practice benevolence. Mercy is, therefore, subjective and objective, passive and active—a spirit and a practice. If we follow the meaning of the Greek word used in this Beatitude, *eleemones*, Jesus emphasizes mercy as a *practice*, although the spirit of mercy is not to be excluded. The spirit of mercy is well indicated in Jesus' reply to a question of St. Peter: "Then came Peter to him and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say, not unto thee, until seven times, but until seventy times seven" (St. Mt. 18:21-35). The spirit of mercy is, therefore, that which is illimitable in its forgiveness. The practice of mercy, on the other hand, is well evidenced in the conduct of the God, "who maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust"; and in the action of the Man who, in generous sympathy, when surrounded by publicans and sinners, replied to the fault-finding Pharisees: "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, *I will have mercy* and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (St. Mt. 18:23-35).

But again we hear: "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." The heart, according to the Hebrew usage, signified the personality, the inmost self. Originally, the reference was to the bodily organ, which was thought of by the ancients as the seat of life. What Jesus means, therefore, is that blessed are those whose personality, or inmost self, is free from all heterogeneous and extraneous elements, who enjoy an unalloyed condition of thought and feeling, in whom worldliness, materialism or false religion have not wrought their

baneful work. Where this unalloyed condition of the heart exists, there is the vision of God. Not, of course, that God can be seen with the physical eye; His existence and presence are *spiritually* discerned. God, indeed, is only visible to the inward eye, and the vision of Him and of eternity, depends rather upon cleanness of heart than clearness of intellect.

Further we read: "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." It is probable that two ideas of "the peacemakers" are included in this Beatitude: the peaceable—the passive sense: the workers for peace—the active sense. Jesus Christ, however, is the great exemplar of both—"The Prince of Peace." In Him, man finds peace with himself, with his God, and with his fellow-man. Yet there is a darker side. It is Jesus Himself who says: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household" (St. Mt. 10:34-36). But how is this to be explained? The answer is at hand. It is this: There can be no permanent peace save that of the kingdom, or rule of God. This is true of the individual life, and of the social life of the world. God and Satan, indeed, can never be at peace. This world is not, as yet, in its entirety God's Kingdom. Hence Jesus, the Apostles, and true Christians everywhere, though essentially peaceable and peacemakers, are the authors of strife—a strife of good with evil, of truth with error. Thus among the peacemakers of the earth such men as Luther, Calvin, Savonarola, Wesley, and many others whose very names are synonymous with agitation and even revolution, must take high rank. And more and more to-day are those who seek to bring peace into the world, even at the cost of strife, being recognized as the children of God. They resemble Him at least in their striving for peace.

Finally, we are told that: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is



your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." Persecution, indeed, is the inevitable accompaniment of righteousness. Loyalty to God and the right in a sinful world always begets opposition. Experience had taught Israel this truth, and many of her greatest men are immortal illustrations of the fact. The history of the early Church also offers convincing testimony to the foresight of Jesus, while the conditions of to-day in many respects attest His truthfulness. The persecution is now different in kind, it is true, and perhaps less in extent, but it is none the less real, and often in its refinement and ingenuousness it bespeaks Satanic device. As it was with the Master, so it is with the servant (Heb. 11:33-40). And yet to the persecuted belongs the Kingdom: "theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

This unequivocal teaching gave to the Jews a shock and a surprise as great as it gives to thousands to-day. Fortunate, blessed are the poor in spirit, the mourners, the meek, the hungry and the thirsty for righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, the persecuted! Men cannot believe it. Usually the possessors of the opposite characteristics are regarded as earth's fortunate and blessed. Hence men ask again and again—*How* are these fortunate? And Jesus replies, as we have seen: To them belongs the Kingdom of God. Now, bearing in mind that the Kingdom of God is the doing of God's will, is it not profoundly true that this is possible only to the poor in spirit, to those who feel their unworthiness? Who are the obedient to God, and, in their obedience, the comforted, but those who mourn for their quondam disobedience, and the shortcomings of the world? Who really inherit the earth—all its truest and highest gifts and pleasures—but the meek, the tractable, the submissive finder and follower of God's way? While those who hunger and thirst after righteousness seek for perfect conformity to God's will—and are they not of all men truly filled with the meaning of life, and satisfied with it?

To illustrate more fully, however, the truthfulness and the significance of Our Lord's words, let us note the vices of which the Beatitudes are the corresponding virtues, and see how the possession of these renders entrance into the Kingdom impossible. Pride is the opposite of humility; self-satisfaction,



of mourning; refractoriness, of meekness; lethargy and apathy, of hungering and thirsting after righteousness; unfeelingness, of mercy; alloy of heart, of purity of heart; strivers, of peace-makers; ready compliance with the world-principles, of persecution for righteousness' sake. Now is it not uniformly true that the arrogant man is not the doer of God's will? The self-sufficient man feels no need of obedience; refractoriness in its rebellious spirit cannot submit; lethargy knows no craving; while unfeelingness cannot enter into the pity and compassion of God. Those whose hearts are admixed with a love of the world cannot perceive God's simplicity of aim and motive; and mere strivers are unable to appreciate the Kingdom, in and through which God is endeavoring to replace human strife by "peace on earth, good will among men." Those, also, who are not persecuted in some way for righteousness' sake, indicate their conformity to the world by this immunity—an immunity utterly impossible to those in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Thus we see that the Kingdom of God does not belong to an individual in view of *who* he is, or *what* he has, but solely in view of *what he is*; further, that a man's true happiness and prosperity is determined by his relation to the Kingdom, or his submission to God's obedience. This idea is extremely revolutionary in every age. It explains much, however, in Jesus' teaching. Because the individual is the unit of the Kingdom of God, and the gateway to the Kingdom lies along the pathway of character, Jesus so assiduously emphasized the value of the *inner* life. Anything which was likely to militate against this, finds in Him an uncompromising antagonist. It was for this reason that He remarked sorrowfully after the departure of the rich young ruler: "Verily, I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God" (St. Mt. 19:23-24). Yet riches in themselves are never denounced by Jesus, although He does apparently regard their possession as likely to prove a misfortune. And indeed the study of a rich man is often a study in unlovely personality.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The great danger in the possession of riches is clearly indicated by Jesus in St. Mk. 10:24: "How hard is it for them that *trust* in

Riches, however, may be used by their possessors to minister to their eternal gain. Clearly is this pointed out in the Parable of the Unjust Steward (St. Luke 16: 1-9). The moral of this parable is found in the ninth verse: "And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." Mammon, however, is not the name of a God; it is simply *money*. The passage then reads: "Make to yourselves friends of the money of unrighteousness; that when ye fail (i.e., die) they may receive you into everlasting habitations." Yet even here we notice that it is called "the money of unrighteousness," because unrighteous means are frequently employed in its acquisition, or because its possession often ministers to unrighteousness of heart and life. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon"—Jesus says also in the Sermon on the Mount. Thus riches are always likely to be opposed to God, and, therefore, to His Kingdom.

How they become accursed, Jesus has revealed in the salient lessons of the selfishness, the self-indulgence, and the indifference to God and man exhibited by rich men in the parables of Dives and Lazarus and the Rich Fool. It is often vulgarly, if truly, remarked of persons "that their money has made fools of them." Jesus makes the same remark, without suspicion of vulgarity, but with perfect truthfulness, in the second of these parables (St. Lu. 12: 16-21). The word "fool" in the Bible, however, does not refer primarily to mental but to spiritual deficiency. The fool of the Bible is not the brainless but the heartless man; the word bears the sting of death, for it is sin. The fool of this parable had no doubt displayed ability riches to enter into the kingdom of God." Unless we remember the assault that wealth makes upon character, we shall utterly misapprehend the constant teaching of the Master about riches. No passages of the New Testament certainly more forcibly reveal the inward and essentially subjective character of the Kingdom than those which have wealth for their subject. It has never been so difficult for a rich man to enter into the visible Church as to justify the strong declaration of Our Lord cited above. The Kingdom in Jesus' view, however, was submission to God's obedience. Hence it is so difficult as to be practically impossible for the rich man to enter the Kingdom because of the inordinate *trust* in money, instead of trust in God, which riches usually beget, and out of which the grace of God alone can deliver. "With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible" (St. Mk. 10:27).

of a high order in the amassing of his fortune; by the world, he was probably accounted sharp and shrewd. Yet Jesus called him "a fool." His meaning may be gathered from Psalm 53: 1—"The fool hath said in his heart, 'There is no God.'" In his *heart* means in his personality, his life, as we have seen. From these, he excludes God. This, in fact, is often the result of wealth. While in the first of these parables we see the effect of a self-indulgence which wealth makes possible, in Dives' feasting while Lazarus starves at the door. Riches, indeed, often close the door to mercy. The money which seems to make a man is very likely to unmake him. Note the almost proverbial worthlessness of rich men's sons, and the general pitiableness of a wealthy aristocracy's inconsequential scions. Whereas poverty begetting piety is often the preparation for greatness. Riches, however, are relative. There is no absolute standard to determine who is a rich man. In *possessions*, great or small, lies the danger; although the greatness of the possessions always increase the danger to the soul.

Thus Jesus taught the essential qualifications for membership in the Kingdom of Heaven. In contrast with the popular Jewish view, the qualifications are individual and personal, not racial or national; they belong to the spiritual, not to the natural man. These qualities were not popular with the Jews, and they have not been pleasing to the mass of men in any age; for humanity has always admired the more robust and masterful qualities, as it affects to call them, although robustness and masterfulness are the very essence of the qualities demanded by Jesus when they are rightly understood. Unpalatable, however, at all times, how bitter must they have been to a people whose dream was of an earthly Kingdom, which should supplant Imperial Rome and surpass her splendor. Small wonder that Jesus was misunderstood and hated.

Jesus, however, was a supreme logician. These characteristics were a logical deduction from His idea of God. Seated near Jacob's well at Sychar, only a short while before His delivery of the Sermon on the Mount, and conversing with the Samaritan woman, Jesus revealed His idea of the essential nature of God. To the woman, perplexed as to the question whether God should be worshiped at Jerusalem, as the Jews asserted, or on Mt. Gerizim, as the Samaritans contended, Jesus

replies: "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. . . . But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (St. Jn. 4: 21-24). These words indeed are the Magna Charta of the soul's liberties throughout all the ages. They are the very Emancipation Proclamation of the human spirit. But what do they signify?

"God is spirit," means that God is a *Personal Being*. We are spirits, or personal beings, in that we *think* and *feel* and *will*: it is the possession of these faculties that makes one a person. Man is thus made in the image of God. Hence, God being a Person—thinking, feeling and willing—it follows, according to the reasoning of Jesus, that true worshipers of God must worship Him in *spirit* and in *truth*, i.e., in that part of their being which corresponds to God's Being—the spirit: that which *thinks* and *feels* and *wills*. Further, they must worship Him in a way which corresponds to the Divine nature, for this is the meaning of the words "in truth."

The worship of God is thus dissociated by Jesus from all limitations of time and place, and associated only with the heart of man, in that which thinks and feels and wills. Not the ritual of worship nor of deeds primarily, not the dogma of stereotyped belief, but the bestowal of the spirit of the inner man is what God demands as essential to true worship. *Being*, rather than *believing* or *doing*, receives the Divine emphasis. Out of this essential nature of God indeed, Jesus' idea of the Kingdom and its subjects unfolds as naturally as the ear from the blade, the lily from the bud. The Kingdom or rule of God must mean for the individual—the submission of the spirit—the self, to God; and, of course, the subjects of the Kingdom must be those whose spirits brook this submission. Humility is thus the first rung in the ladder by which the true worshiper climbs heavenward; it is the prologue to spiritual progress.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>How the spirit of the Kingdom, or of true worship, expresses itself both toward God and man, Jesus illustrates in the exquisite teaching of the Sermon on the Mount. More admirable than any commentary is the Sermon itself, and just here the reader is asked to read the Sermon in its entirety.

Thus, with Jesus, we return to the conception of the Kingdom, as it existed in the mind of God from all eternity: A Kingdom of God in humanity, a conscious and willing obedience; a conception ruthlessly rejected in the rebellion of mankind, but now seeking realization through Jesus of Nazareth. Having noted the condition of entrance into the Kingdom, and the predisposing qualifications, we will now consider briefly the salient duty of the subjects of the Kingdom.

While membership in the Kingdom confers great privileges and blessings, it also entails great responsibilities and duties. In fact, as soon as Jesus had disclosed the blessing inherent in membership, He supplemented it with an explicit statement of the duty involved. The members of the Kingdom were to be the light of the world, and the salt of the earth. In rejecting the popular Jewish conception of the Kingdom, Jesus did not reject the idea of a rule by conquest. His was to be a conquering Kingdom. The apparently negative virtues which He demanded, however, seemed to the Jews, enamored of the idea of forcible conquest, utterly incapable of winning a Kingdom. If Jesus was to found a Kingdom—how was it to be extended? That was a perplexing question. The idea of conquest, however, had always been present in the concept of the Kingdom, as we have seen. The family or clan, during the Patriarchal period, had been selected with the view of conquering humanity by blessing it. The nation was chosen at Sinai as a kingdom of priests to reconcile men to God. This thought also had ever been a part of the prophetic teaching. In view of this, and the perplexity of the Jews, we are not surprised to find Jesus dwelling with especial emphasis upon the vast responsibility of the subjects of the Kingdom toward the world.<sup>1</sup>

The idea of a forcible conquest of the world, however, had been met in the Temptation with the ideal of a bloodless conquest through truth and love. The weapons of war were dis-

<sup>1</sup>Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt has lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven" (St. Mt. 5:13-16).



carded for those of peace. This becomes conspicuously apparent as Jesus sets forth the duty of the Kingdom's subjects.

First is the duty of illuminating the dense darkness of the world by the light of God's truth, as it is revealed in the words and deeds of the individual subjects of the Kingdom.

"Heaven doth with us as we with torches do,  
Not light them for themselves: for if our virtues  
Did not go forth of us, 'twere all alike  
As if we had them not. Spirits are not finely touched  
But to fine issues."

The Kingdom of God, indeed, is truth: "*the Truth*" about God and Man and Life (St. Jn. 18:37), and Jesus trusted absolutely in the self-propagating power of this truth, as we shall see more fully in our next Chapter. Indeed, the truth of God and the heart of man are adapted each for the other, and are mutually complementary. This sublime confidence expresses Jesus' whole life. He lived and died for the truth. In fact, the sublime confidence of Jesus in the winning power of truth is well expressed by the Poet:

"Truth only needs to be for once spoke out,  
And there's such music in her, such strange rhythm,  
As makes men's memories her joyous slaves,  
And clings around the soul, as the sky clings  
Round the mute earth, forever beautiful,  
And, if o'erclouded, only to burst forth  
More all embracingly divine and clear:  
Get but the truth once uttered, and 'tis like  
A star new-born, that drops into its place,  
And which, once circling in its placid round,  
Not all the tumult of the earth can shake."

However, it should not be overlooked that in the extension of the Kingdom there is a supernatural factor. Christianity, indeed, always unites Heaven and earth, even in its agencies of extension. It is both an ideal of life and a *power in life*. Hence we expect a supernatural element. Man, however, has his part no less than God. Man wields the mighty weapon of truth in word and deed. It is the seed which he sows. In itself, as we have seen, it is adapted to the soil of the human heart and the soil is suited to it. Yet, as the seed demands sunshine and rain, and much else for its growth, so the seed



of truth, sown by man, needs for its germination, growth and fruitage, the operation of the Holy Spirit. We are not, however, considering the supernatural, but the human factor in the extension of the Kingdom.

The antiseptic properties of salt, Our Lord brings before the subjects of the Kingdom, also, to illustrate their duty in preventing corruption in human life. As salt is also used to extract flavors, so the Kingdom's subjects are to extract from life all that is sweetest in it, to exercise a freshening influence upon the moral, the intellectual, and the social life of the world, and to give to everything its true flavor. Hence, whether the Kingdom and its subjects act openly like Light, or secretly like Salt, the Kingdom is to be a conquering Kingdom. Its subjects are to illumine the world's darkness, to preserve it from further corruption, and to extract what is sweetest in life. Thus the duty is clearly imposed; but how, more specifically, shall it be fulfilled?

The answer to this question constitutes one of Christianity's many startling paradoxes—conquest by submission; victory through defeat; the Crown through the Cross; priesthood through sacrifice of self; Reconciliation through priesthood. It has been said that "Christianity, the true Christianity, carries no arms; it wins its way by lowly service, by patience, and by self-sacrifice." These were undoubtedly the successful weapons of its earlier warfare, and they have ever been the means of Christianity's triumphs where permanent conquests have been made. The power of truth and of self-sacrifice—that is, love—whether manifested in life or in death was, and is, the mightiest weapon for the establishment of the Kingdom. Jesus, in fact, founded the Kingdom by dying for it, no less than by living for it. "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me," says the Master (St. Jn. 12: 32), and the subjects of the Kingdom, like their King, must extend the Kingdom by similar means. Goodness, indeed, is contagious as well as evil, and that which will most quickly fan into flame the slumbering spark of divinity latent within every man, is the example of self-sacrifice and the personal embodiment of truth. The type of character, therefore, developed within the Kingdom of God is in itself the most effective agency in the extension of the Kingdom. Because the character of the subject is of the highest

attractiveness and beauty, men are drawn toward the Kingdom. As Tennyson declares: "We needs must love the highest when we see it." The law is apparently inwrought in human nature.

The marvelous effectiveness of this character as a missionary agency is seen in the homage paid to Jesus among all peoples.<sup>1</sup> Not only is the effectiveness of this character evidenced, however, in the Person of the Kingdom's Founder, it is also manifest in the wondrous triumphs won in the first three centuries of Christianity's existence. These were won in the face of a bitterly hostile world, which vented its wrath and opposition in the most untiring persecutions, which were continued for several centuries, until the alliance of Church and State. Beginning with the first persecution of the Christians in Jerusalem, when the brilliant Stephen was sacrificed to the implacable hatred of bigoted Jews, until the close of the last Imperial persecution, what weapons could the subjects of the Kingdom wield against their bitter foes? None save the sublime appeal of truth and of self-sacrifice—more irresistible than all the weapons of human ingenuity. They could not use the weapons of a carnal warfare. The Master had said: "My Kingdom is not of this world; if my Kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my Kingdom not from hence" (St. Jn. 18:36). The world, indeed, has acknowledged the power of this weapon in the saying: "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> While nations have their heroes who receive the plaudits of their countrymen, and even a single nation may furnish a hero to the world whose fame outgrows national or even racial limitations, there is only One whose name is above every name and who receives the homage of all men, irrespective of clime, or race, or age. This exalted position is accorded the Galilean Peasant, at least by thoughtful minds, chiefly because of the simplicity and the beauty of His life of love and service—a life crowned and adorned with the cruel Cross of Calvary. The sublimity of His Life and Death has ever riveted the attention of men, and prompted their glad acclaim—"My Lord and My God."

<sup>2</sup> We are not amazed, then, to find Tertullian, about 220 A. D., testifying to the widespread diffusion of Christianity, or extension of the Kingdom. After making every allowance for rhetorical effect and the enthusiasm of the advocate, there is a large element of truth in the passage: "For whom have the nations believed—

That Jesus was justified then in the selection of these weapons, the testimony of ages attests. Men and women were to be brought to the obedience of God through the proclamation of truth in word and deed, and by the power of self-sacrifice. In turn, they were to become the Light of the World, and the Salt of the Earth. Truth, indeed, is Light, and Love is Salt. In the Kingdom of God, then, the sole forces on the human side are the compelling power of truth, and the appealing power of love. By these means alone is the Kingdom of God, which had been wrecked by Adam (humanly speaking), to be launched by Jesus, the Second Adam, and brought to the haven of God's conscious, willing and loving obedience.

We now see how much more comprehensive and spiritual are the Kingdom and its subjects in the view of Jesus than in the thought of even the inspired prophets. Yet His view had its roots in the past. There was a continuity of thought and purpose. These words of St. Peter, for instance, are singularly reminiscent of those which describe the ancient covenant of Israel to which reference has been made. "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. . . . Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:

Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and they who inhabit Mesopotamia, Armenia, Phrygia, Cappadocia, and they who dwell in Pontus, and Asia, and Pamphylia, barriers in Egypt, and inhabitants of the regions of Africa which is beyond Cyrene, Romans, and sojourners, yes, and in Jerusalem, Jews and all other nations, as for instance by this time, the varied races of the Gaetulians, and manifold confines of the Moors, all the limits of Spain, and the diverse nations of the Gauls, and the haunts of the Britons (inaccessible to the Romans, but subjugated to Christ), and of the Sarmatians, and Dacians, and Germans, and Scythians, and of many remote nations, in all of which places the name of Christ who is already come, reigns as of him before whom the gates of all cities have been opened." Nor were the Kingdom's weapons of Truth and Self-sacrifice of avail only in reaching one or two classes, for Tertullian again testifies to the diversified character of the Kingdom's subjects: "The outcry is that the State is filled with Christians, that they are in the fields, in the citadels, in the islands; they make lamentation as for some calamity, that both sexes, every age and condition, even high rank are passing over to the profession of the Christian faith."

which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God" (St. Pet. 2: 5, 9, 10). The Subjects of the Kingdom, indeed, as well as the Chosen People, were destined to be a Holy Nation—a Kingdom of Priests.

We cannot leave this subject without cursory reference to the question of rank in the Kingdom of God. The Jewish mind, vitiated by materialistic tendencies, pictured a temporal King, and an earthly court with courtiers of every kind and degree. The Kingdom of God was simply a Kingdom of the world much magnified. In contrast to the gradations of court-life, with their accompanying conventionality, artificiality, and insincerity, Jesus demanded of his courtiers the simplicity and guilelessness of childhood.<sup>1</sup> Such abstract teaching as this, however, was not sufficient to overcome the inveterate ideas and expectations of the disciples. More concrete illustration was demanded. Old ideas die hard. Hence we read of that singular interview of James and John with Jesus as they seek high place in the Kingdom.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>"And he came to Capernaum: and being in the house, he asked them, What is it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves who should be the greatest. And he sat down and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be the first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all. And he took a child and set him in the midst of them" (St. Mk. 9:33-35).

<sup>2</sup>"And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we desire. And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you? They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left, in thy glory. But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized: But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give: but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared. And when the ten heard it they began to be much displeased with James and John. But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But not so shall it be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be the servant of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give

The Kingdom itself, however, is infinitely more than position, honor and adulation. Lobbying, too, as we see from this incident, is never successful in the Kingdom, although it is often very successful in the Christian Church. In the Kingdom, indeed, the most stringent Civil Service prevails. The position always corresponds absolutely to the personal fitness for the position. There are no misfits. There is no officialdom. Sycophancy and nepotism have no portion there. On the Godward side, indeed, the Kingdom is an absolute Monarchy; on the Manward side, it is the purest of Republics; it is the essence of democracy, and its highest positions are open to all its subjects alike, and are gained alone through *service* and *merit*.

To emphasize the lofty character of service in the Kingdom of God, Jesus washed the feet of the disciples at the Passover Supper. Resuming His seat, His words indicate the significance of the act.<sup>1</sup> This indeed is a splendid lesson in humility. To regard the Master's action as the institution of a rite which is obligatory upon all Christians is, of course, to pervert the meaning of the act. The principle is infinitely more important than the action itself, and the principle established is that of *greatness through service*; the idea, that greatness is not inconsistent with the lowliest service.

"Wouldst thou the holy hill ascend  
And see the Father's face  
To all His children lowly bend  
And seek the lowest place.

his life a ransom for many" (St. Mk. 10:35-45). The import of this passage is apparent.

St. Matthew gives substantially the same interview, with one difference, however. It is the mother of Zebedee's children who comes with her sons and desires high position in the Kingdom (St. Mt. 20:20-28). She is thus the first of many mothers who desire preferment for their sons, and ignore the salient fact that preferment in the Kingdom of God comes only through a life of lowly service, and by drinking the cup of bitterness and sorrow, which is the portion of every prophet of the Living God.

<sup>1</sup>"Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, Verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them" (St. Jn. 13:13-17).



Thus humbly doing on the earth  
What things the earthly scorn,  
Thou shalt assert the lofty birth  
Of all the lowly born."

Ambition, indeed, unless it is the desire to become great through service of mankind, is a mark of littleness. It is simply selfishness which would use others for personal ends. And selfishness is the opposite of the Kingdom of God.

To illustrate further how selfishness defeats its own ends, and to warn against it, Jesus spoke the very suggestive Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard (St. Mt. 19: 27 and 20: 1-16). Saint Peter expected great things because he had forsaken all and followed Jesus. With quick incisiveness we hear this parable with its keen rebuke of St. Peter's self-seeking, and its unmistakable warning in the words: "So the last shall be first, and the first last, for many be called but few chosen." The great lesson of the parable is this. The Kingdom of God in the reward given to its subjects for service so far transcends the sphere of ordinary business life that *whatever* is given to the most ardent, and to the first laborer, so greatly exceeds all that he could earn or demand as the result of service that no injustice is done him if the Master sees fit to give a like reward to those who have wrought only one hour. Failure to recognize this, and the endeavor to introduce the eminently Jewish and commercial spirit—*quid pro quo*—into the Kingdom, might make Peter verily the last instead of the first, for the Kingdom is love of others, not of self.



## CHAPTER VII

### THE KINGDOM'S METHOD OF DEVELOPMENT

WE recall that two features were brought forward prominently by the Jews in regard to the coming of the Kingdom of God: The hated Roman yoke was to be cast off, and the world's sovereignty transferred from Rome to Israel. This would be brought about by some catastrophe or cataclysm. Hence the inauguration of the Kingdom was popularly conceived as sudden, and its consummation as a matter of a little while.<sup>1</sup> Jesus, however, much to the surprise and disgust of the Jews, compared the development of the Kingdom (1) to the growth of a seed in *method*; (2) to that of a mustard seed in *result*; and (3) to the fermentation of leaven for the manner of its *intensive development*.

To the popular conception of the sudden and dazzling advent of the Kingdom and its rapid extension, Jesus, in fact, opposed the vital process of *growth*. His analogy was that of a seed planted by a gardener, who simply sows his seed, and sleeping by night and working by day, is without worry and appar-

<sup>1</sup>Traces of this view are often met with in the New Testament. Jesus, asked by the Pharisees, "When the Kingdom of God should come?" replied: "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the Kingdom of God is within you," or *in the midst of you* (St. Lu. 17:20, 21). After the Resurrection, also, the disciples say, "We hoped that it was he which should redeem Israel" (St. Lu. 24:21), having in mind the immediate introduction of the Kingdom. During the forty days also between the Resurrection and the Ascension, the question asked directly by the Apostles was, "Lord, dost thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6). We are surprised to encounter this strange ignorance of the character of the Kingdom at the close of Jesus' ministry, and after His years of teaching and the Apostles' intimate association with Him. It only proves, however, that Jesus' idea of the Kingdom and its method of establishment was "so wholly out of line with the ambitions and expectations of the Jewish people" that only by the greatest effort could they grasp His teaching.

ently indifferent to its fate. Yet, because of the inherent character of the seed, and the inherent nature of the soil, and their mutual adaptability, the seed germinates and grows, the gardener knows not how. "And he said, so is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. *For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself*; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come" (St. Mk. 4: 26-30).

The seed, of course, in this parable is the idea of the Kingdom, or rule of God, and the soil into which this idea is sown is the human heart. Then, because of the mutual fitness of the seed and the soil, the seed germinates and grows. This was novel teaching to the Jews, and it struck a fatal blow at the prevalent opinion. Its significance, indeed, was unmistakable. It meant that the mechanical conception of the development of the Kingdom must give place to the vital. Henceforth *growth* was the fundamental law. When we recall, however, the inward and spiritual nature of the Kingdom, as it was conceived by Jesus, we appreciate readily the analogy. He taught, and He must necessarily have taught, that the ascendancy of God's rule over the heart of man, and over the world of man, would be like the slow and unobserved, but sure, growth of the planted seed. "First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear:" "So is the Kingdom of God."

Further, once planted, the idea of the Kingdom—God's rule being needful to man, and man recognizing the need of God's sovereignty—will grow slowly and quietly, *apart from human anxiety*. Hence the Kingdom did not demand forcing, as the Jews supposed. No temporal arm of the State upon which to lean was necessary; nor were the favorite methods of the ecclesiastic "in preserving the faith" in vogue with Jesus. Reliance, so far as human effort was concerned, was placed simply upon planting; and this being done, the self-propagating power of truth, in conjunction with the vitalizing power of the human heart, became the active agent. "*The earth bringeth forth fruit of herself.*"

Nothing could have been further, however, from the Jewish

mind than such a conception. The Apocalyptic idea, indeed, has vanished in a moment, and Nature is at hand. Nature, in fact, has become the parable of the Kingdom of God. This substitution, effected so quietly by Jesus, was fraught, however, with vast results for the idea of the Kingdom. It compelled forthwith the entire reconstruction of Jewish thought; it was the rock upon which long-standing hope and expectation was dashed in pieces. How momentous its conclusions were may be gathered from the principles outstanding in the parable. The three fundamental truths derived are: First, that the Kingdom of God has a self-propagating power; second, that it grows silently and unobservedly; and, third, that it has an orderly sequence of growth: the early stages being preparatory to the consummation. The Apostles, strange to relate, even the brilliant and profound Paul, failed to understand this, and we find them, in common with the entire Apostolic Church, looking for the speedy consummation of the Kingdom, as the reader may see from a perusal of the First Epistle to the Thessalonians. Their failure to appreciate the Kingdom's analogy of growth is pardonable, however, in view of their strenuous devotion to the mechanical conception of the Apocalyptic literature.

But the Jews dreamed, also, of the Kingdom's inauguration amidst pomp and splendor, and this expectation was in full accord with human nature, which usually demands that all undertakings of importance shall be launched amid attention and furor. This thought, indeed, was present even to the mind of Jesus in the temptation to cast Himself from the pinnacle of the Temple, as we have seen. It was necessary for Jesus, however, in view of His decision in the Wilderness, to violate at every point the most cherished traditions of the Jews. Hence, He not only likened the development of the Kingdom to the growth of a seed, but selected specifically the *mustard seed*. This was a very small seed; so small, indeed, that it had furnished a proverbial expression to the Jews. When they desired to signify the minuteness of anything, it was customary to speak of it as being as "small as a grain of mustard seed." Jesus, Himself, seems to have been aware of this usage, if we may judge from His remark that if the disciples had "faith as a grain of mustard seed," nothing would be impossible to them (St. Mt. 17:20). "Another parable put he forth unto them,

saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field; Which indeed is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof" (St. Mt. 13: 31-32; cf. St. Mk. 4:30-32; St. Lu. 13: 18-19).

By this parable Jesus indicated an additional characteristic of the Kingdom of Heaven. The seed, which was the most insignificant of all seeds, grew into the largest of annual garden shrubs. The Mustard Tree was not, properly speaking, a tree, as is sometimes supposed, but a large shrub, such being called trees among Orientals. The plant, indeed, grew with remarkable rapidity, and often attained the height of ten or twelve feet, with widely extending branches, which offered attraction for the passing birds in way of shelter, rest and food; the mustard being a common food for pigeons. Hence it was selected by Jesus to illustrate the noticeably disproportionate result between a beginning and an end, between the tiny seed, so insignificant and unpromising in itself, and the ultimate luxuriant growth.

It is also interesting to observe that a favorite figure adopted among the Biblical writers to illustrate the development of various Oriental kingdoms was that of a growing tree. The reference of Ezekiel 31: 3, 9 to the Assyrian kingdom, and of Daniel 4:10, 12, are excellent examples of this tendency. The development of the Kingdom of God itself was also so illustrated (Ez. 17: 22, 24; Ps. 80: 8). It is noticeable, however, that the figure adopted is always that of a luxuriant vine, a stately cedar, or some imposing tree, such an analogy being alone deemed worthy for the great kingdoms of the earth, or the Kingdom of God. Hence, the comparison of the Kingdom in its beginning and development to the small grain of mustard by Jesus is the more marked.

This analogy, however, served Jesus' purpose admirably. For what beginning could have been more insignificant than the beginning of the Kingdom of God in the person of Jesus of Nazareth? A peasant carpenter of a despised province; poor and unknown until His thirtieth year, when He began to teach; only creating a ripple on the surface of His nation's life; with friends recruited chiefly among the humble, the ignorant, the

outcast, or at most among the middle class, and arousing animosity everywhere, soon or late, instead of making friends, Jesus appeared a poor advocate of any cause, especially of one so important as the Kingdom of God. Finally, with the Cross, it looked, indeed, as though the fiasco was ended. Yet there soon followed the comparatively rapid spread of Christianity throughout the then known world, and the greatness of the results achieved, human society being affected at well-nigh every point, and conditioned in its every aspect. This, however, is the parable of the mustard-seed. The Kingdom of God in one life—and that a seemingly insignificant one—develops into a result out of all proportion to the small beginning.

Thus, Jesus' sole purpose in this parable was to indicate that the beginning of the Kingdom, contrary to all Jewish expectation, would be insignificant and unpromising; that, notwithstanding this, the Kingdom would develop according to its own inherent method, and would be ultimately crowned with a magnificent consummation, ever more and more inducing men to seek its salutary rest, shelter and sustenance. The wide, extending branches of the Mustard Tree would be understood in this sense, in view of the similar use of the Old Testament (Ezek. 17: 22-24).

Again, however, Jesus found it necessary to oppose a prominent feature of the current Jewish conception. According to the thought of His day, the Kingdom would be developed by *external* means. The method would be from the outward to the inward. At the point of the sword, for instance, God's law was to be written upon the hearts of the Gentile world. Through ceremonialism and an elaborate cultus, even the Jew was to be made inwardly righteous. This conception Jesus absolutely and unhesitatingly reversed. "And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the Kingdom of God? It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened" (St. Lu. 13: 20-21; St. Mt. 13: 33).

Leaven is used here by Jesus to symbolize "the unseen influence and penetrating power of the Kingdom of Heaven." This use of the word, however, is somewhat singular, inasmuch as in almost all other New Testament passages leaven is used in an evil sense. The words of Plutarch, indeed, reveal the popular idea of leaven in the Ancient world. "Now leaven is itself



the offspring of corruption, and corrupts the mass of dough with which it has been mixed." Jesus, Himself, also warned the disciples on one occasion to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees (St. Mt. 16: 6-12), and of Herod (St. Mk. 8: 15). The word is also used by St. Paul in Gal. 3:9, and 1st Cor. 5:6-8, of bad qualities which are to be avoided. "Purge out, therefore, the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump." By rabbinical writers the word was also used in much the same way. "Rabbi Alexander, when he had finished his prayers, said: Lord of the universe, it is clearly manifest before thee that it is our will to do thy will; What hinders that we do not thy will? The leaven which is in the dough," i.e., "the evil impulse which is in the heart." This constant use of "leaven" in an evil sense has led some to insist upon attaching a bad signification to the word as used here by Jesus. They make it prophetic, for instance, "of the heresies and corruption which should mingle with and adulterate the pure doctrine of the Gospel." Jesus, however, distinctly says that the Kingdom of Heaven is like leaven: not that there are pernicious tendencies within the Kingdom which act like leaven.

This analogy, indeed, Jesus adopted most fittingly because it disclosed another distinctive element in His conception of the Kingdom. He was not busied with the good or evil character of leaven, but with its *peculiar, intensive, energizing, and permeating* power. Leaven illustrated, in His thought, the mysterious influence to be exerted by the Kingdom of God on that with which it should come in contact. Once introduced into the world, although trivial and hidden, the Kingdom would work from within, and with silent operation, yet none the less effectively. This fact is well illustrated in the early history of Christianity. Obscure, unknown to the mass of men, and well-nigh unmentioned by secular writers, but imbedded in the heart of human society, Christianity did its effective and quiet work, conditioning and transforming, until even Imperial Rome was compelled to reckon with it by alliance in the hope of saving her tottering sovereignty. The Kingdom was gradually leavening the whole lump.

The individual life itself is also leavened in the same manner. The end is not attained at once. The idea of the sovereignty of God is introduced into the mind, and accepted by



the heart, and lies there unseen, but not inactive. Its energizing power is quietly affecting the whole man, until the entire life shall be leavened for God and for Christ. A little lodgment affects at first a part, and gradually the whole. A little idea finds entrance, and causes the reconstruction of a system of both thought and conduct.

Much, indeed, has been accomplished in the world through this leavening process of the Kingdom—how much only few begin to realize; but much remains to be accomplished. May we not find hope that it will be accomplished in the words, "till the whole is leavened"? Perhaps these words are Jesus' prophecy of the ultimate submission of humanity to God. Who knows? At least the achievements of the leaven in the past are the open prophecy of still greater triumphs in the future.

It is now becoming more and more apparent how greatly Jesus' ideal of the Kingdom differed from the popular ideal. The Jews, in fact, were satisfied with their conception of a temporal Kingdom, founded by force, and suddenly triumphant. Jesus could entertain only the idea of a spiritual Kingdom, growing quietly, and in an orderly manner, from most insignificant beginnings to large proportions, and in its development, by its peculiar and intrinsic properties, transforming everything with which it should come in contact. This method of development, however, was the inevitable and the logical outcome of the idea of the Kingdom determined upon by Jesus in the Temptation. A spiritual sovereignty over the heart of man must be a gradual development.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE WORLD'S RECEPTION OF THE KINGDOM

IN the parables which we have just studied Jesus viewed the growth of the Kingdom from the absolute standpoint. He considered the *normal* working of the Kingdom and of the human heart. The picture was of the growth of the Kingdom, all things being equal. The parables are parables of undaunted optimism; they seem to prophesy unconditional success. But in this world all things are not equal. Had Jesus stopped with these illustrations, His action would have been most unjustifiable. Indeed, the facts of life and of experience do not sanction a vision of such roseate hue. Jesus, however, did not arrest the progress of His thought with these parables. The truth of the seed, the mustard seed, and the leaven, is rounded out in the teaching of the Parables of the Wicked Husbandmen, The Marriage of the King's Son, The Barren Fig Tree, the Sower, the Two Sons, and the Children Playing in the Market Place. In these the development of the Kingdom is considered from the relative standpoint. The freedom of the human will is treated of as conditioning the growth of the Kingdom. The concrete completes and modifies the abstract.

Jesus, indeed, in speaking of the world's reception of the Kingdom, considered its acceptance from three standpoints: the national, the individual, and the class. His teaching revealed clearly how the sovereignty of God, which He sought to establish, would be received by His nation in His own time, and by individuals and certain classes in all times.

The nationality of Jesus, and His love alike, caused Him to be interested primarily in the reception which His own nation would accord to the Kingdom of God. As the Chosen People, they were the natural heirs of the Kingdom, and at the outset of His career Jesus probably expected great things of them. The lofty mind and the loving heart, indeed, always generate

confidence. For three years He waited hopefully to see what they would do, and while disquieting intimations arose from time to time, it is only toward the close of His ministry that He indicates openly the rejection of the Kingdom by the Jews. On the last Tuesday of His earthly life, Jesus expresses Himself fully upon this point. Only a day or two before, He had entered into the Holy City, riding upon an ass, a colt, the foal of an ass. This was His public acknowledgment of His Messiahship, in accordance with the prophecy of Zechariah (Zech. 9:9) and the shouting multitude with their Messianic acclaim understood well the significance of the act. Yet, despite teaching, miracle, act, the leaders of the nation would not receive Him. His public acknowledgment of His Messiahship, indeed, only made His public rejection the more profound and bitter. On the day of His entry into Jerusalem the Pharisees had asked by what authority He did these things. He confuted them by a similar question as to the authority of John the Baptist. When they were unable to answer, and thus revealed their patent insincerity, in consequence, there came from the very depths of the outraged soul of Jesus several parables, two of which are the most ominous commentary upon Jewish national history conceivable: the parables of the Wicked Husbandmen and the Marriage of the King's Son, or, as it is sometimes called, the Wedding Garment.<sup>1</sup>

These parables were born of the travail of a human soul, for Jesus was first, last, and always, a patriot and devoted to His race. His patriotism, however, was not blindness to His country's faults. On the contrary, His consciousness of His countrymen's shortcomings was keen and anguishing in proportion to the greatness of the love He bore them. It is this patriotism, stung to the quick, that speaks in these parables.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The idea of the garment, however, is subsidiary to the main idea of the parable, and certainly should not give name to the whole.

<sup>2</sup> The first of these parables is as follows: "Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and

The interpretation of the first of these parables is as follows. The vineyard represented the Chosen People. The husbandmen were the leaders to whom God from time to time had entrusted the tutelage of the nation. Planted for the cultivation of righteousness and truth, prophet after prophet had been sent to demand the vintage. These are the servants, more correctly, the *slaves* of the story. And how splendid is the word! The prophet, the slave of God—owned, body, mind, and soul; no will of his own—none but his master's. These, however, have been rejected, abused again and again, and sometimes killed. At last the only Son, the heir, is sent. He, of course, was Jesus, and the fruit which He demanded was acceptance of the Kingdom. But the husbandmen's greed for the inheritance led them to reject and even to kill the Son, the last and the chief of God's messengers. The "hedge"

stoned another. Again he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard to other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that He spake of them. And when they sought to lay hands on Him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet" (St. Mt. 21:33-46). This parable was founded probably upon the fifth chapter of Isaiah, in which the prophet compares Israel as a nation to a vineyard: "For the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the House of Israel, and the men of Judah, his pleasant plant; and he looked for judgment, but beheld oppression; for righteousness, but beheld a cry" (Isa. 5:7). Some of the phrases, indeed, which were used by Jesus, were reproduced from this account. Hence the very familiarity of His hearers with the illustration probably aroused a keen interest and desire to fathom the Master's meaning. This, however, was not difficult, for the parable is Jesus' sad commentary upon Jewish history.

of the parable is thought by some to indicate the Law; the wine vat, the altar, and the tower, the temple. This, however, is a matter of minor importance. The central truth of the parable is the right of God to demand from Israel the fruit of holiness and the acceptance of His sovereignty, and the duty incumbent upon Israel throughout her entire history to bear this fruit. Yet the nation had failed signally.

Consequently, Jesus asked, "what will become of those husbandmen?" The Pharisees reply, according to St. Matthew (in St. Mark and St. Luke 12:1-12 and 20:9-18, Jesus answers), that the Lord will come and destroy those murderers. His hearers, indeed, answer aright; they unconsciously pronounce their own condemnation to their subsequent confusion and shame. Jesus, however, makes the application of the parable more pointed. He compares himself to the stone which is rejected by the builders, but which nevertheless becomes the corner stone. This is a reference to Psalm 118:22, which makes Israel, the nation despised and rejected by the Gentiles, the very cornerstone of God's relations with the world. The words, however, had been applied in later times to the Messiah by the Rabbis, hence Jesus' application of them to Himself. Further, in view of the nation's repeated rejection of the advances of God and its treatment of those through whom they were made, especially its murder of the Son and Heir, dire punishment was also to be administered. This was actually accomplished in the destruction of Jerusalem, the overthrow of the leaders of the theocracy, and the fall of the Jewish state in A. D. 70. The Kingdom also would be given to others—"to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Not, it is apparent, to the Gentiles as a whole, or to any specific nationality, but to a people gathered from many nations, to an eclectic nation,—all the subjects of the true Kingdom of God. Further, this nation is represented as one *already* bringing forth the fruits of the Kingdom, i. e., possessing the characteristics indicated in the Beatitudes. Here we see again the sublime confidence expressed in the parable of the Seed Growing Secretly. If Jewish hearts were hardened against the reception of the seed, there were at least human hearts elsewhere which would prove congenial soil for the sowing of God's truth. Jesus, in fact, had already seen foregleams of this "nation"



in the Roman centurion at Capernaum, at whose faith He exclaimed, "I have not found so great faith, *no not in Israel*," (St. Luke 7:1-11), and in the Syro-Phoenician woman, and the Samaritans. Such a prophecy as this was certainly maddening to the Jews, and we read: "When the chief priests and Pharisees had heard His parables, they perceived that he spake of them." They feared, however, to prove the absolute truthfulness of His portrayal by laying hands on Him then, because the multitude took Him for a prophet.

Jesus, however, speaks another parable.<sup>1</sup> He voices the same general truth, but looks at the subject from a different standpoint. The thought now is not primarily of right and obligation, but of privilege and opportunity. The parable is that of the Marriage Feast.<sup>2</sup> The details of this story are

<sup>1</sup> This parable is given more fully in St. Matthew 22:1-14 than in St. Mark, or St. Luke 14:16-24, and the context is different. Given by St. Matthew immediately after the parable of the Wicked Husbandmen, it clinches the truth enunciated there. This variance in context has given rise to various suppositions. Some think the version of St. Luke an imperfect one, which found its way into some early document used by him. Others maintain that his version is the original, and that in St. Matthew it is combined with another. This, however, is speculation. Its idea and position here are eminently logical. It is, in fact, complementary to the preceding parable. The parable itself may have been suggested by Zephaniah 1:7, 8.

<sup>2</sup> "And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said, The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come. Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage. But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully and slew them. But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: And he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage. So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests. And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment; And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand



easily identified. The circumstances of its delivery make clear the content. God is the King; Jesus is the groom; His marriage is the establishment of the Kingdom. The servants, or slaves, are John the Baptist, Jesus perhaps, and the disciples, who, now that the marriage is ready, in accordance with the Oriental custom summoned those who had been invited previously. The invited, of course, are the Jews. Some—the majority (vs. 5)—pay no attention whatever to the call; others—the minority (vs. 6)—are bitter, manifesting open hostility and slaying the servants. In consequence the King is angry and sends forth his army, destroying the murderers and burning their city. This language again is singularly descriptive of the fate which overtook the Jews in the destruction of Jerusalem in A. D. 70.

This, however, was not the end of the matter. Pearls had been cast before swine; that which was holy had been given to dogs. The invited were not worthy, so the servants were sent outside the city into the cross-roads (such is the meaning of the word) where people were wont to congregate, with directions to summon every one to the wedding—good and bad alike. The intent here is apparent. The Kingdom, or sovereignty of God, had come near. Those who had been invited, and were expected to avail themselves of the privilege—the Chosen People—will not do so. Hence the Gentiles, and according to St. Luke's version of the parable, the poor and the maimed, the despised and the overlooked in Israel, will be summoned to the Feast. All will be called, but only those who are qualified for admission will be permitted to enter. This is the thought suggested by the wedding garment. While those venturesome enough to enter without suitable attire—righteousness of mind and heart—will be cast out amid the wailing of despair and the gnashing of teeth in hopeless impotency. Many, indeed, will be called, but few chosen. It is interesting to note, also, how closely the proclamation of the Kingdom to the Gentiles is associated here by Jesus with the fall of Jerusalem.

No more succinct résumé of Jewish history could have been and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen."

given than that which is offered in these parables. Chiefly of historical interest, they possess, however, an eternal significance. The illustration is historical, but the principle is eternal. "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit shall be hewn down and cast into the fire." Duty and privilege cannot be trifled with on pain of punishment dire and certain. This is the saddening burden of the parable; the Jews are the object lesson. The Jew, indeed, is the tragedy of history.

"Though the mills of God grind slowly,  
Yet He grinds exceeding small,  
Though in patience long He waiteth,  
With exactness grinds He all."<sup>1</sup>

Thus Jesus, toward the close of His life, showed that He was well aware that the Chosen People would prove recreant to their trust, and unmindful of their privilege to the end. The proof lies in these parables of doom, which are at once the nation's death note and the Kingdom's paean of victory.

Jesus, however, did not conceive of the acceptance of the Kingdom in terms of nationality alone. He also spoke of it in terms of individuality. This, in fact, He was compelled to do in view of His conception of the Kingdom as primarily personal and spiritual. The parable of the Sower is pre-eminently the parable of individuality.<sup>2</sup> It is really a psychological study. Its position is unique, and its content makes it

<sup>1</sup> The rejection of the Kingdom by the Jews is the plaint also of the parable of the Barren Fig Tree (St. Mk. 11:20-25). The closing words of the parable of the Pounds are also indicative of the same truth: "But those mine enemies which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me" (St. Luke 19:27).

<sup>2</sup> "And he spake many things to them in parables, saying, Behold a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed some seeds fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up: Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up and choked them: But others fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." (St. Matthew 13:3-9 cf., St. Mk. 4:3-20, St. Lu. 8:4-15.)

the pivotal parable. With its advent, the national stage of the Kingdom has passed, and the individual, henceforth, is the unit of the Kingdom of God. This parable, in fact, was the first to be spoken by Jesus, and its bearing upon all subsequent parables is evident from His answer to the question of the disciples: "Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know *all* parables?" (St. Mk. 4:13). While this illustration is pastoral in its simplicity, each Evangelist seems impressed with the importance of the story, inasmuch as each one represents Jesus as saying at the close: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." Indeed, this parable is Jesus' nearest approximation to a definition of the Kingdom of God. In it He both states what the Kingdom is, and gives its vicissitudes of growth. Elsewhere, He makes many allusions to it, and gives partial illustrations of it, but here He is comprehensive and thorough; He goes to the bottom of the matter. It was very important, indeed, that He should do so; for the disciples, as the future representatives of the Kingdom, must understand its pregnant meaning, and failure to understand this parable would mean failure to understand all parables. Recognizing this, Jesus departs from His usual custom and becomes, in this instance, the interpreter of His own parable.<sup>1</sup>

Before we note the interpretation of this parable let us realize that nowhere is the surpassing intellectuality of Jesus more clearly revealed than in the parables. Jesus Christ was an intellectual giant, no less than a moral giant. His intellect, indeed, was as clear as crystal, alert, powerful, commanding. This characteristic of the Christ has received but scant ac-

<sup>1</sup>"Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower. When anyone heareth the *word of the kingdom*, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he that receiveth seed by the wayside. But he that receiveth the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it: Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for awhile: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. He also that receiveth seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. But he that receiveth seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty." (St. Matthew 13: 18-23).

knowledge. It has been almost lost sight of in the dazzling splendor of His moral vision. The painters and sculptors of all ages have made us familiar with a Christ whose face and form reveal the gentler qualities of humanity. They have been strikingly deficient in portraying the virility, the manliness, and the intellectuality of the Christ. Whether this can be done may be a matter of debate, but certainly the Christ of Art is not the Christ of the New Testament. It is probable that the intellectuality of Jesus, not to speak of His spirituality, defies portrayal. However this may be, every student of the teaching of Jesus should be alive to the keen intellectuality which He exhibited from the first in a marvelous mastery over the fundamental principles of the Kingdom of God, and in a no less marvelous ability in enunciating them. This is singularly exemplified in the first of His parables.

"The sower soweth the word," says Jesus, and the word sown is "the word of the kingdom." Now words are the expression of ideas, and the idea, in this case, is *the idea of God and His rule*. It is, in brief, the Gospel of the Kingdom. (Let the reader consult St. Matthew 4:23; 24:14; Acts 1:3; 28:31). The thought, indeed, in this parable constituted the mystery or hidden truth of the Kingdom. Awaiting a perfect Kingdom of God, ushered in by a tour-de-force, the Jews learn that the Kingdom is akin to an idea sown among men, and that it is subject to all the vicissitudes of planting and growth. It was exceedingly difficult for the disciples to grasp this teaching, so Jesus reinforces the main conception of the parable by its details. While Chrysostom's canon of interpretation—"Nor is it necessary to waste labor by way of explanation over all matters in the parables, but having learned the design for which it was constructed, to get possession of that, and not to busy one self with anything further"—is usually to be followed, this parable is an exception to the rule. In this case, the details are of primary importance. But what is the significance of the various details?

The seeds which fall on a hard, trodden path, and lying upon the surface are soon carried away, are typical of those persons who hear the message of the Kingdom, but do not understand it. They are men without spiritual receptivity. The condition is abnormal, but it is real. Contact with life has

atrophied, not developed, their higher susceptibilities. The superinducing causes are not given by Jesus, but they are many and as effective to-day as then. And what is the result? That which cannot penetrate into the inner life but lies upon the surface of the heart, extraneous influences soon remove. This detail shows also that the foes of the Kingdom are not only within the man, but are without him as well. There is a vast environment of evil which militates against the Kingdom, and seeks to prevent even its planting.

There is also the stony soil, says Jesus, which is typical of those who hear the message of the Kingdom and "anon with joy receive it." This is the shallow, the volatile, the emotional type. "Of course," they say, "God should rule." But they do not count the cost. When the tribulation which ensues upon any honest attempt to do God's will arises, they are soon discouraged and rendered lifeless. This class is always the congenial soil of revivalism. Under stress of appeal and excitement religion springs into existence, and as easily dies.

But again, some seed falls among thorns. Jesus' masterly analysis of human nature is strikingly apparent here. The soil is propitious, but it endeavors to grow two crops at the same time. The old story of God and Mammon. The cares of this world, or correctly of the age, are said to choke the Kingdom. Something more, indeed, than positive and acknowledged sinfulness wages warfare against the Kingdom of God. The anxiety of men in regard to temporal affairs militates against the development of God's rule. This thought, in fact, was ever present to the mind of Christ. We meet it in the parable of the King's Supper, and of The Rich Fool, and we find it elaborated at length in the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus, of course, did not discourage thoughtful provision for the present and the future. What He had in mind was that anxiety which finds in this the great object of life to the neglect of the life of God, and which is a powerful foe of the Kingdom in every age.

The deceitfulness of riches, however, is also mentioned as a foe of the Kingdom. Wealth seems man's greatest good. Jesus, however, warns against its deceitfulness. And well might He do so. Wealthy men are by no means the happiest of men. The ability to enjoy wealth is indeed often lost in the shriveling



of the soul attendant upon its accumulation. There is, also, the disquieting endeavor to increase or to retain the possessions, the haunting fear of loss, or of death, or even of enjoyment at the expense of spending. There is the surrounding crowd of sycophants whose patent insincerity casts suspicion on all one's friends. But pre-eminently are riches deceitful in that they lead to the placing of emphasis upon what a man *has*, rather than upon what a man *is*. They foster the fearful lie that happiness consists in *having* rather than in *being*, and thus blind to life's true values. They are often productive of moral bankruptcy. Acting in concert with man's love of pleasure and the lust for other things which lies buried in the human heart, the cares of life and the deceitfulness of money too frequently spring up to throttle the idea that God should rule; hence thousands of lives become unfruitful.

Some seed, however, falls into good ground, and this good soil bears fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. One fourth of the sowing, at least, is not in vain. Here again is the prophetic doctrine of the remnant. Is the percentage of fruit-bearers always only one to three? If so, slender indeed is the stream of salvation. But narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. However this may be, it is noticeable that the Kingdom of God does not bear the same amount of fruit in every life. We cannot expect, therefore, the same degree of Christianity in all Christians: the young with the old, the well-trained with the ill-trained, the intelligent with the illiterate. The fruitage is dependent upon the planting, the environment, and the character of the soil; some is rich, some is mediocre, some is comparatively poor.

Such, in outline, is the parable of the Sower. While prophetic of the future, it was also reminiscent of the past. Jesus, indeed, had already witnessed this varying reception of the Kingdom on the part of individuals. The outcome of experience, the parable was undoubtedly spoken in mercy, in order that the disciples might understand the failure of much of their Master's sowing, and also the reception which awaited the truth when sown by them. The story, indeed, is the sad comfort of every preacher to-day, and the ever-true commentary upon human nature.

Jesus, however, spoke also of the attitude of certain classes



toward the Kingdom of God. The parable of the Children Playing in the Market-place is Jesus' criticism of a class, as well as of a people (St. Luke 7:31-35). "But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, And saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented. For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children. Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not" (St. Matthew 11:16-20).

The meaning of this parable is not apparent at once; it opens to view, however, upon examination. Jesus finds a resemblance between the thoughtless, frolicking children who play in the market-place and reproach their disinterested playmates for responding neither to their mournful nor to their merry strains, and the men of His own time. Jesus and John the Baptist are evidently the unwilling playmates; the men of that generation are the fault-finding children. Neither John nor Jesus could satisfy the people of their time. John, the rugged, unbending prophet of the wilderness, was too austere, ascetic, and unsympathetic. Although attracted for a time, an ease-loving age soon discarded the strenuous prophet of the desert (St. John 5:35). Then came Jesus. He was a decided contrast to John. Yes; but He was too unrestrained and too unconventional. John did not dance to their music; Jesus did not mourn to their whims. Hence there was only criticism and abuse from their countrymen. As a result, the age, in the thought of Jesus, was as superficial as childhood at play. Indeed, the men of His generation were merely players at religion.

The age was dominated by the Pharisees, as we have seen. Being formalists, and content with the husks of religion, they became inevitably the chief opponents of John and of Jesus, who were the advocates of a moral and spiritual religion. Because of an inveterate tendency to live on the surface, and to be satisfied with the external; because undisturbed by any deep sense of the inward and the spiritual, that age was distinctly

lacking in moral earnestness. John and Jesus were phenomena which it could not understand. They were accordingly dismissed summarily with the characterization of one as a devil, and of the other, as "a glutton and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners." It is always so easy to abuse what we do not understand.

This abuse, however, was a criticism of the fault-finders rather than of those faulted. Our Lord makes this apparent in the remark which concludes the parable. Despite Pharisaic sneer, He is comforted in the thought that "Wisdom is justified of all her children." It was true that neither the Pharisees, nor their generation, appreciated the Baptist nor Jesus. In their blind self-sufficiency, they could dismiss both with a superficial criticism, but fortunately there were some wise enough to justify the wisdom of Jesus and of John, as it was exemplified in their varying conduct. These, of course, are the children of wisdom.

Both of the criticised had acted, indeed, in accordance with a true principle and a true conception of their era, although their *laissez-faire* generation had not the moral depth to see it. John, born in the priestly course, and to the priestly office, in reaction against his time, refused the honors and emoluments of his hereditary calling, and, despite birth and inheritance, sought the solitude of the wilderness to hear amidst its undisturbed stillness the voice of God, which his age was stifling. There he caught the accents of reality, and emerging to the banks of the Jordan, he translated into speech, the intense convictions born of that silence. In view of the approaching Kingdom, and the needful preparation therefor, the character and the career of John were eminently fitting. Asceticism, sternness, denunciation, moral intensity, the age demanded. John met the demand admirably. He was the embodiment of the highest in his time; the flower of his age. On the other hand, Jesus, the founder of the Kingdom, conscious of God's rule and its blessing of redemption and release, aware of the joy and peace in His own life, and of the bliss which awaited a lost world, shunned no man, but sought all men in love. His manifest duty was to be in the world, and for the world, but not of the world.

Thus Jesus indicated by this parable that the Pharisees, and

the men of His generation, would not receive the Kingdom of God. This, however, is equally true of the same class in every age. The Pharisees, unfortunately, cannot be restricted to the time of Christ. Their lineal descendants are multitudinous; the fecundity of the class is marvelous. The world, in fact, is full of religious dilettantes, of players at religion. Our Lord designated these repeatedly as *hypocrites*; and the title was indeed deserved. The word originally signified an actor—one who spoke through a mask, according to the custom of the ancient stage. Such, indeed, is the hypocrite throughout all time—one who *plays a part*. He may seek only to deceive others, or he may unconsciously deceive himself. Hypocrisy, however, is either the intentional, or the unintentional acting of a rôle.

Unfortunately, well nigh every age betrays the earmarks of this Pharisaic class. The Roman Church, for example, at the Reformation, lacked the moral earnestness to grasp the significance of the strenuous voice of Luther, in spite of the repeated warnings of Savonarola, Wycliffe, and others, the far-seeing heralds of the coming dawn. The lethargic Anglican Church of the eighteenth century lacked, to its shame and loss, the moral depth to appreciate the mighty protest of Wesley, and the zeal and intensity of the early Methodist movement. Yet both the Roman and the Anglican Churches were very earnestly playing at religion. In fact, many instances of this Pharisaic blindness might be cited, not only in the Church, but in the State and in Society. The Abolition movement, the present labor agitation, and the general social movement of our time witness to its presence in more recent years. In truth, this moral obtuseness is the fruitful parent of heresy and schism in the Church, and of Revolution in the State and in the Social Organism. These are caused more frequently by the goodness of the human heart than by its evil. A self-satisfied and superficial age meets the enlightened or the unenlightened, the restless and the earnest heralds of a new era with stolid indifference, open contempt, or hostility. Often the witnesses for the truth fall, the victims of their progressive ideas, and the blindness of their generation. Yet the down-trodden truth rises again, only strengthened by defeat, to cumulate ever accumulating strength until the storm breaks; then we have

revolution in Church or State or Society: the atmosphere is cleared, and men breathe more freely.

Jesus also gives another well-founded criticism of this Pharisaic class in the parable of the Two Sons. "But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to-day in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not; but afterward he repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not. Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him" (St. Matthew 21:28-32).

This parable is the preface to the parables of the Wicked Husbandmen, and the Marriage of the King's Son. It is addressed to the same persons, and with much the same intent. In it, Jesus does for His auditors that for which the poet Burns petitions in his famous lines:

"Oh wad some power the giftie gie us  
To see oursel's as others see us!"

Our Lord, in fact, not infrequently assumes the rôle of the candid friend. Malice, however, or the mere desire to wound are never the prompting motives. This parable, and the superb invective of the denunciation of the Scribes and Pharisees, more poignant than any that can be found in the Philippics of Demosthenes, the Orations against Cataline, or the letters of Junius (St. Matthew 23), are the attempts of an outraged but loving heart to open the blind eyes, and by heroic measures, to sting into amendment of life, where the soft appeal of love has failed.

But what is the portraiture of this parable? To understand that the Two Sons represent respectively the Jews and the Gentiles is to misunderstand the parable, and to ignore the context. The correct interpretation finds in the first mentioned son, the publicans and the harlots of Jesus' day. The former were the despised tax-gatherers who, as Jews, in the service of

the Roman Empire, were thought to sacrifice both their religion and their patriotism to assume such an office. The latter were women of the street, who, in the sacrifice of chastity, lost self-respect, and became a menace and a scourge to others. These classes, along with other Jews before the days of John the Baptist, had been commanded by God to work in His vineyard of Israel, and to produce the fruit of righteousness of life according to the teaching of the Law and the Prophets. They had curtly and steadily refused. But when John came, there was a change. The tremendous earnestness and the moral power of the man had produced a conviction of sin, had fanned into flame the slumbering embers of conscience, and had awakened a desire for a better life. Consequently they repented, and went into the Vineyard.

But the Second Son—who is he? Manifestly he represents the Chief Priests and the Elders whom Jesus was addressing; the members of the Sanhedrin, the great legislative, executive, and judicial council of the Jews and their class. While they, with much pretention and an unseemly ostentation which called forth stinging rebuke from Jesus on more than one occasion, were apparently working in the Vineyard, in truth they were not laboring in the Vineyard at all. And, unlike the poor publicans and harlots, the strong voice of the Baptist had no message for them, and his passionate appeal awakened no response. Even when they saw the supposedly irredeemable classes repenting, they were not convinced. Hence Jesus aptly remarked, "The publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." The satire of this remark is incomparable. Before the *Chief Priests*, the *Elders*, the *Aristocracy*, the *Orthodox*, the publicans and harlots were to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Verily, the wounds of the Friend are faithful. But how humbling to Jewish pride, and how bitter to Jewish ears! We must indeed admire the splendid courage of the Man Christ-Jesus, and His keenness of perception. Have these parables no meaning for our generation?

## CHAPTER IX

### THE VALUE OF THE KINGDOM

NOTWITHSTANDING its varying reception at the hands of men, the Kingdom would remain life's chief value. Jesus was fully convinced of this as His words attest. Let us notice some of His declarations.

The Lord's Prayer is interesting and suggestive in this connection. The first petition is that the name of God, not the mere name however, for among the Hebrews names were not conferred indiscriminately, but each bore a distinct significance, *rather the name with all that it connotes* may be hallowed or revered of men. Secondly, petition is made that God's rule may become actual in that God's will may be done on earth as it is done in Heaven. This, of course, would be the direct outcome of man's proper reverence for God; hence the first petition reveals the logical order both in time and thought. What is noteworthy, however, is that Jesus foreshadows His estimate of the value of the Kingdom, when He makes prayer for its coming, and that which will induce its coming, precede prayer for any immediate individual need. This, indeed, is an essential characteristic of all prayer genuinely offered *in the name of Jesus*. To ask anything in Jesus' name means to ask *in the spirit, the power and the intention of Christ*. It means that the one who prays is occupying toward God the relationship of Jesus in love and desire, so far as that relationship can be assumed by any human being. All prayer is, therefore, conditional: the condition of successful prayer is the Kingdom of God. If this fact were remembered how much richer would be both the teaching and the practice of the Christian Church.

But we are not confined to inferential evidence as to the value of the Kingdom. There are explicit statements of Jesus upon the subject, Most obvious, perhaps, is this one: "Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and



all these things shall be added unto you" (St. Mt. 6:33; St. Lu. 12:31-32). Here we see that Jesus would not only have the coming of the Kingdom the primary burden of humanity's prayer, He would also have it the primary quest of mankind. When given by St. Matthew, the words just quoted are a portion of the Sermon on the Mount, and the context assist greatly in their interpretation. Jesus has just declared that "No man can serve two Masters"—*God and Gold*. He bids His followers "take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink." He inquires, "Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" He cites the birds of the air, and the tender lilies of the field as illustrations of that which is fed and clothed by the Father in Heaven without wearying anxiety. He then asks, If God makes such provision for even the short-lived grass of the field, shall He not much more clothe and care for His children? The answer is self-evident; and Jesus closes His subject with an earnest exhortation to the disciples, not to take thought as to what they shall eat or drink, or wherewithal they shall be clothed, for these are the chief objects of the heathen Gentile's life. Rather are they to "seek *first* the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added."

Jesus, indeed, sees that mankind at large seeks the temporal and the transient, and that about these they worry greatly.<sup>1</sup> Now in contradistinction to this quest, Jesus urges mankind to seek, *in the first place*, the Kingdom or sovereignty of God. His idea is this: Instead of that forbidden care for temporal concerns and necessities, which most people make the chief end of life, mankind should seek *first* the rule of God, and that righteousness of life of which God approves. The passage, however, is really stronger than it appears to be at first sight. To seek something *first* might imply that there could be a legitimate seeking of something else *second*. This, however, is not the teaching of Jesus. A *second* striving is entirely precluded from His thought by the words which follow, and which precede these. Jesus has just declared against the objects of the Gentiles' search, and has shown that there will

<sup>1</sup> "Not to be anxious" is the significance of the Greek *merimnesete*, which is translated in the Authorized Version by the somewhat colorless phrase, "Take no thought."

be no necessity for such a quest on the part of His followers. The promise is explicit that in seeking *first* the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness, "*all these things shall be added unto you*" (vs. 33).

Any strong statement is likely to arouse the combative nature of man, as strong natures always arouse more or less hostility. This is emphatically true of such a statement as this. It is a bold challenge to humanity. It attacks man in a vital point. He is told *not* to make the very things, which seem to be first by every law of nature and necessity, the object of his consideration. Instead he is to seek what appears to him a somewhat intangible and unreal something, called the Kingdom of God, which in turn will bring all needful things. Hence many think Jesus an impractical idealist, or a fraud and sensational deceiver. Is this statement, indeed, sense or nonsense? Is it faith or works? In answering this question, we must bear in mind the essential idea of the Kingdom. Then the query is: Will food and raiment be added to one who seeks God's absolute sovereignty over his life, as the gift of God wholly, or is man to be accounted a partial cause? The answer to this question also reveals one of the Kingdom's fundamental values.

While we would not derogate from God's part in the matter, we believe that the necessities of life will be added normally, not merely as a reward but as a partial effect or result; for one of the fundamental principles of God's law is *work*. It is, indeed, an important requirement of the righteousness of God, and it was a law of nature long before it was a law of religion. "Work" is the law of God, however, enunciated as distinctly in the Fourth Commandment, as is the observance of the Sabbath. "*Six days shalt thou labor, and do all that thou hast to do,*" is as obligatory upon mankind as is the duty implied in the words: "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy." The implications of this truth, however, are not as fully understood by the disciples of Jesus as they ought to be. From it follows that in the Kingdom of God there is nothing *religious per se*, and nothing *secular*. Everything indeed becomes religious. Work is transfigured. The men who labor on the six days of the week, become ministers of God, no less than he who ministers on the one supposedly

sacred day. The six days for labor belong to God, and are quite as sacred as the one day of rest. God overshadows the week; it is his entire. This truth also proves that Christianity, or the Kingdom, is the most practical of all things. It brings God to bear upon every duty and relationship of life, however humble, and consecrates each duty and all relationships to God. Christianity, indeed, is the religion of the commonplace.<sup>1</sup>

Hence, in seeking first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness, man is doing that which inspires to work. This is the sense of Jesus' remark about the fowls of the air and the lilies of the field; they are fed and clothed, yet they do not madly fret and strive. They simply fulfil the law of their being, and, as a result are fed and clothed by God. So, says Jesus, should it be among men. The world is constituted for man quite as much as for the birds, and if man will simply follow the law of his being, which is to seek *first* the Kingdom of God, food, drink and raiment will be added.

<sup>1</sup> Passing from the Old Testament to the New Testament, we find Jesus declaring, at the age of twelve years, that He must be about His Father's business. Later He affirmed that the work which His Father had given Him to do He had performed. (St. Jn. 17:4) "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." Well-nigh the last words of the Master were, "*It is finished.*" The reference, of course, is to His work. The presupposition also of the Parable of the Sower, the Pounds, the Talents, and the Laborers in the Vineyard, is the idea of the necessity of labor. Everywhere, indeed, Jesus assumes work as the normal characteristic of man. Even in the selection of His apostles He followed the principle so strikingly illustrated in the Old Testament: Elisha was summoned to the prophetic office from the plow. Saul and David and Moses were also called from busy activity to their respective duties. God apparently had no respect for idlers. Indeed God and men alike, and even bees, despise drones. Hence the Apostles were summoned from ships, from nets, and from the receipt of customs; none were called from the street corners or the market places. From fishers of fish they became fishers of men. They exchanged one department of work for another. The mind of God and of Jesus upon this point is, indeed, fully revealed in the question: "If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?" (St. Luke 16:11.) It is the servant who has been "faithful in very little" to whom is committed "authority over ten cities" (St. Lu. 19:17). Such language denotes the really spiritual nature of work. Labor, indeed, is a sacrament of grace.

This however, is not the way of the world. The usual way is to seek *first material things*, then, by and by, perhaps spiritual things.<sup>1</sup>

Even more explicitly, however, the value of the Kingdom is disclosed in the parables of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl of Great Price. Spoken in the privacy of a dwelling, and to the disciples alone, these parables constitute Jesus' most emphatic statement of the supreme value of the Kingdom of God. "Again, the Kingdom of God is like unto treasure hid in a field, the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: who, when he hath found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it" (St. Mt. 13:44-46).

Archbishop Trench informs us "that in the East, on account of the different changes of dynasties, and the revolutions which accompany them, many rich men divide their goods into three parts: one they employ in common, or for their necessary sup-

<sup>1</sup> The order of quest, emphasized here by Christ, is also set forth in the Lord's Prayer: "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"; then follows, "Give us this day our daily bread." This teaching almost convinces of the authenticity of a purported saying of Jesus, which has been handed down by Clement, Origen, and Eusebius: "Ask the great things, and the small will be added to you; *ask also the heavenly things, and the earthly will be added to you.*"

It is significant that in St. Luke's Gospel the parable of the Rich Fool is the occasion of Jesus' exhortation: "Seek first the Kingdom of God." Whether Jesus repeated His teaching, or whether this difference is due to confusion in the Evangelist's mind, is comparatively unimportant. The context in St. Luke's Gospel is at least logical, if not historical. To emphasize the usual quest of man and its futility, Jesus spoke the parable of the Rich Fool. He then followed in much the same strain as in St. Matthew's report, and concludes with the command, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God." The meaning is quite apparent. The Rich Fool, as the result of his life of striving, had amassed wealth; he thought himself sufficient unto himself, but the Kingdom of God did not come. He died a spiritual bankrupt. Now, in marked contrast to this, Jesus remarks that where the Kingdom of God is sought *first*, temporal necessities will follow, at least in a measurable degree. The Fool had made a fatal mistake. To warn against a similar mistake is the object of Jesus.

port: one they turn into jewels, which, should it prove needful to fly, could be easily carried with them; a third part they bury. But as they trust no one with the place where the treasure is buried, so is the same, should they not return to the spot before their death, as good as lost to the living, until by chance, a lucky peasant digging in his field, lights upon it. And thus when we read in Eastern tales how a man has found a buried treasure, and in a moment risen from poverty to great riches, this is, in fact, no strange or rare occurrence, but a natural consequence of the customs of these people."

Such, indeed, is the circumstance of the first of these parables. A man has stumbled unexpectedly upon a hid treasure. For fear it might escape him, he hides it again, while he goes and sells all that he has, and buys the field. The legality of this action is indisputable; the morality of it is certainly questionable. Jesus, however, is not discussing the morality of the action; He is simply setting forth the supreme value of the Kingdom, and the price at which alone it can be bought. This parable must be classified with the parables of the Unjust Judge, and the Unjust Steward, and interpreted in the same generous way. Evidently, Jesus was not in sympathy with intellectual prudery. The second illustration, however, offers no difficulty. A merchant was seeking pearls. These were greatly esteemed in the Ancient World. Beautiful in themselves, the tradition as to their formation probably enhanced their value. "The fish conceived the pearl from the dew of heaven, and according to the quality of the dew, it was pure and round, or cloudy and deformed with specks. The state of the atmosphere at this time of conception, and the hour of the day, had great influence on their size and color." "*Goodly pearls*," this merchantman is seeking. He finds one, at length, of great price, and, selling all that he has, makes himself the owner of the coveted treasure.

These parables are much alike in their general features, yet there is a noteworthy difference. With His accustomed insight, Jesus divides mankind into two classes: the seekers, and the non-seekers, the thinkers, and the non-thinkers, the aspirants, and the non-aspirants. The division, however, is absolutely untainted by cynical criticism, or haughty depreciation of those who do not think. The man who finds the Hid Treasure,



stumbles upon it *accidentally*; he is involved in no *conscious* search for anything. This is typical of the majority of men. For them, there is no absolute good in life. That which is immediately about them occupies their thought to the exclusion of all else. They are content to live in the practical and the material. Speculation as to their origin, the reason for their existence, and their destiny, is utterly foreign to them. They are men, "Who have no Whence or Whither in their souls." They are unconscious of any treasure of surpassing worth, hidden from their eyes, and lying deeper than they have explored. But suddenly, and unexpectedly, the blind eyes are opened, the treasure is discovered, and their joy becomes intense.

But what is the discovery? Some maintain that the field of the parable is the Bible, and the Hid Treasure, the knowledge of Christ which is hidden there. Others identify the field with the visible Church, while the Hid Treasure is the inward and spiritual Church. Neither of these interpretations, however, fulfil the requirements of the parable. The field is the world of human life, and its Hid Treasure is the knowledge of and the necessity for God's rule, which most men overlook, entirely unconscious of its value, until perchance stumbling upon it, they perceive its inestimable worth, and for joy, gladly sacrifice all that they possess to gain it. What, indeed, could better express the sacrifice of self-will in its countless manifestations—the imperative price of the Kingdom, as we have seen—than the parting with all one's possessions in order that this Treasure might be obtained.

In the second parable, however, we have a merchantman *seeking* goodly pearls. Unlike the personage of the former parable, this man is alive to the higher things of life. Finalities have for him an interest, also origins. The material and the practical are not sufficient. He rises above the carnal, and considers the intellectual, perhaps the spiritual. He asks questions which he cannot answer. He thinks, he aspires! Finally he discovers *one* pearl of surpassing worth. He sells all that he has, that he may buy it. His search need go no further. The void of his life is filled. All lesser things become centered in one thing. Life is seen to be a unit. Finalities and origins are explained. His questions are answered. He has found the Kingdom of God, the Pearl of Great Price.



If we put ourselves in the position of those who listened to the Master, we must agree with them as to the utterly stupefying effect of these parables as spoken by Him. To Jesus' countrymen, the supreme value of the Kingdom lay in the avenging of Israel's wrongs, the humiliation of the Gentiles, and the exaltation of the Jew in the establishment of a world empire. But what was its value in the thought of this singular Galilean? The disciples even could not understand. The vision of the Jews, indeed, included themselves alone: their history, their wrongs, their destiny—this earth. Jesus, on the contrary, surveyed humanity throughout the ages; the world's history, its wrongs, its destiny—not only earth, but heaven. There was no necessarily irreconcilable conflict, however, between the two views. The history of the Jews and the world's history were not intended for hopeless contrariety. They were intended to be complementary. But the Jews would not have it God's way. They could only interpret value in terms of earth and of self. Spiritual things were "at a discount." Hence, Jesus' conception of the Kingdom's value was an enigma beyond solution. How could the Kingdom of this peasant, the Galilean carpenter, be the most valuable of all things, and worth life's supremest sacrifice? Yet, despite the national rejection of the Kingdom, despite the sorry reception which it would receive at the hands of men, despite class criticism and repudiation, Jesus never wavered in His estimate of its value. Was it madness? The Jews thought so. Is it madness to-day to declare the Kingdom of God the *highest good*? The world thinks so. Is this, however, a criticism of the Jews and of the World, or of Jesus and the Kingdom? Let us see.

The Kingdom of God in its last analysis is the sovereignty of God, whether we consider it from the standpoint of fact, intent, or aim. What, then, is the value of this to man? This is a large question, and in endeavoring to answer it we cannot be more than suggestive. The Kingdom is the most valuable of all things in that it means the salvation of the individual, and of the world. The presupposition of Christianity is that we live in a *lost* world. An old-fashioned idea, and unpleasant to the ears of our masterful generation, it is never-

theless true.<sup>1</sup> But what is meant by being lost? When we speak of the *lost* condition, and we are thinking of religion, Hell is usually prominent in the thought. Our minds are full of imagery, the creation of dread, and of much preaching. The word has thus a harsh meaning. Indeed, when many refer to the mission of Our Lord, they speak of it as an endeavor to save mankind from the torments of Hell. This, however, is only a half-truth, and, without the complementary truth, is exceedingly pernicious, for it loses sight of the primary idea of the term.

Jesus, however, constantly used the word and He must have had a definite idea as to its meaning. In studying His thought, indeed, we have an opportunity to learn how the true teaching of the New Testament is often marred by our unwillingness to interpret the words of Jesus in their natural significance, and without recourse to strained traditionalism. In three memorable parables, Jesus indicates the true signification of this word. In defending His seemingly familiar intercourse with publicans and sinners from Pharisaic aspersion, He narrates the Parables of the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, and the Lost, or Prodigal Son (St. Lu. 15). In the first of these, Jesus justifies His conduct by that of a shepherd, who leaves his ninety and nine sheep to seek one that is lost; in the second, by that of a woman who spares neither time nor strength in the search for a coin which had been lost. In the third, He tells the story of two brothers, one of whom leads a life of filial obedience, while the other, departing from his father's home, seeks the excitement of riotous living. He drinks the cup of his fancied happiness to the dregs, and then comes the inevitable reaction, satiety. Seeing the distress to which his folly has brought him, he returns to his home, and is welcomed by his father with merriment and thanksgiving, while his elder brother is displeased at the favor shown the wanderer. Now what is important for our subject is this: the father justifies his conduct in these words: "It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad, for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was *lost* and is *found*." Here the fundamental meaning of "lost," as used by Jesus, is evi-

<sup>1</sup> "*The Son of Man is come to save that which was lost.*" (St. Mt. 18:11.)

dent. The boy had strayed from his father's house, had become lost in the *path of living*. Returning, however, to home and duty, he is said to have been found. Thus the term is truly pathetic. The word speaks of a human being, who, embarked upon the sea of life, has lost his bearings, is tempest tossed, and likely not to reach his destination.

If we think of the depths of meaning in the word, as thus interpreted, we understand the work of Jesus as we never did. There bursts upon us the full significance of the saying: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." Men, indeed, are lost in the way of living; lost, too, to the truth, thinking erroneously, and with truth divorced from life; confused, also, as to the ideal of life, and craving the inspiration to live. Jesus, however, cries, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life." The exquisite tenderness of the figure of the Good Shepherd also becomes very real. Thus Jesus' conception is one of great beauty and persuasiveness. Pitying humanity, He has come to save, not so much from future penalty, as from present peril.

An age of surpassing achievements in the material and the intellectual worlds may be loth to believe itself lost. Looking, however, from the world without the man to the world within, skepticism becomes belief; doubt, certainty. Soon or late, man is convinced of his impotency with regard to himself. He is conscious of a strange contrariety of experience. He cannot interpret himself to himself. He cannot control himself. Nature and mind are easier to harness and to handle than self. He fulfils to some degree in his own personality the experience so graphically depicted by St. Paul. "For that which I do I allow; but what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me

from the body of this death?" (Rom. 7:15, 18-24).

This experience, indeed, is universal. Man is at war with himself. His higher and lower natures fight. The lower often triumphs, and with the triumph comes the haunting conviction that it *ought not* to have triumphed. Man suffers, in fact, from what the philosopher Kant calls the *categorical imperative*: that within which tells him in no uncertain voice that he *ought* and *ought not*. While the individual is free to choose between different courses of action, there is something within which unfalteringly bids him *choose the right*. If the direction is not obeyed, a feeling of guilt ensues. Life thus abundantly witnesses to man's lost condition, and explains humanity's constant cry: "Oh for a man to arise in me, That the man I am, may cease to be!"

Now just here appears the supreme value of the Kingdom of God. It is the Kingdom which *finds* man. It rescues him in the lost condition. It brings the prodigal back to the Father's house. Or, if we adopt more popular phraseology, it is the Kingdom which *saves* man. In using this term, however, we must interpret aright a misinterpreted theological term. What is salvation? Let us take our cue from the name of our Lord. The name Jesus, true to the Hebrew usage, was not conferred haphazardly upon the Christ-Child. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus *for he shall save his people from their sins*" (St. Mt. 1:21). Jesus, in fact, is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew, Joshua, or Jehoshua, which means "Jehovah will save." The name was bestowed upon Jesus because it was typical of His life work. But from what was He to save? "From Hell," of course is the usual reply. Yet the Angel of the Annunciation declares: "he shall save his people *from their sins*." Now manifestly there is a difference in these two conceptions. Salvation from sin is the real mission of Christ, however, and in order to understand the high valuation which He placed upon the Kingdom of God, we must ask another question, What is sin?

The Greek word translated "sin" is *amartia*, which means "missing the mark." It is very significant that the words most frequently used for "sin" in both the Old and New Testament have this fundamental idea. Man is regarded as having missed the mark which God has set for him. Humanity has

missed its aim. Life in consequence is largely a bungle and a tangle; thought, an error and deceit. And man feels measurably responsible for this. Hence to the anguish of the condition itself is added the haunting sense of guilt with its inevitable accompaniment—the fear of punishment. This, indeed, is the condition from which Jesus came to *save*. Salvation, then, is something more than deliverance from a future Hell.

The popular idea of salvation, we fear, loses entirely the true beauty of the thought of Jesus. Let us remember that the words used by our Lord are always of poetic significance. Jesus was neither a dogmatician nor a systematic theologian. His method was to suggest rather than to define; to provoke thought rather than to offset inquiry. "Salvation," indeed, as it represents His thought, was full of poetic meaning. The Greek term has the thought of *healing, curing, making well*. It is interesting to notice that the word used in the Angelic message is employed by the Evangelists on several occasions to translate the thought of Jesus Himself. For example, in speaking to the poor woman who had an issue of blood, and who had just touched His garment, Jesus said: "Daughter, be of good cheer, thy faith hath *made thee whole*," i. e., *saved thee*; for the word translated "hath made thee whole" is this very word "save" (St. Mt. 9:22). Again in St. Mark 10:52, Jesus, in curing a man of his blindness, says: "Go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole." Here again is our word "*save*." Now in both of these instances—and others might be cited—the reference is to a person who is afflicted or diseased. Jesus comes and saves them *physically*, i. e., makes them well. This word, then, when applied to the spiritual part of man, represents most admirably Jesus' conception of salvation as spiritual health. Jesus, Himself, in justifying His intercourse with outcasts, says, "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are *sick*."

The idea, then, is that mankind is morally diseased, and to cure the maladies of the soul and their gruesome consequences, to save man in this sense, Jesus came.<sup>1</sup> Consequently,

<sup>1</sup> This idea of salvation as healthfulness is found in certain of the Psalms: "Thy way may be known upon earth; thy *saving health* among all nations" (Ps. 67). Again, in Psalm 103, we read of the Lord who "healeth all thine infirmities."



salvation is the curing of humanity's malady, in order that the individual and the race may hit the mark, or attain their God-appointed goal. It is also the removal of that sense of guilt, which rests upon mankind like a somber pall, and which often engenders despair. Salvation, indeed, is the Kingdom of God.

We have dwelt upon this subject because it is of great importance in properly estimating the value of the Kingdom of God. It is only in the Kingdom, in fact, that man can find himself; *self-realization through self-sacrifice*; can find the unifying principle of life, developing through his obedience to the will of God, all the powers, active and latent, in his personality. And he thus affects not only himself, for no man liveth unto himself, but others also. He may influence even posterity through the laws of heredity, and also the general environment of man. If it is true that the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of those that hate God and refuse to obey Him, it is equally true that the virtues of the fathers are visited upon thousands in them that love God and keep His commandments. So that the Kingdom of God in the individual begets the Kingdom of God in the offspring; or, if this be too strong a statement, it at least predisposes to, and paves the way for, its establishment.

"I read a record deeper than the skin.  
What! Shall the trick of nostrils and of lips  
Descend through generations, and the soul  
That moves within our frame like God in worlds—  
Convulsing, urging, melting, withering—  
Imprint no record, leave no documents,  
Of her great history? Shall men bequeath  
The fancies of their palate to their sons,  
And shall the shudder of restraining awe,  
The slow-wept tears of contrite memory,  
Faith's prayerful labor, and the food divine  
Of fasts ecstatic—shall these pass away  
Like wind upon the waters, tracklessly?  
Shall the mere curl of eyelashes remain,  
And God-enshrining symbols leave no trace  
Of tremors reverent?"

But man is more than the product of heredity. He is influenced profoundly by his surroundings. Yet, while environment may make the man, man also makes the environment. Hence it is important to observe that the Kingdom of God



in man means both gradually and ultimately the creation of an environment which is favorable to the interests of the Kingdom in the individual, and in the world. The words of St. Paul are significant to-day: "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth *for the manifestation of the sons of God*. Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (Rom. 8:19-21-22). The present environment of man, indeed, cries out for redemption. This the Kingdom gives. In it, both man and creatures are relieved. Even the horse, the dog, and the cat fare the better. The yoke of sin is lifted. All things again become *good*. Thus we see that the sovereignty of God is no arbitrary fiat of a tyrannous sovereign. It is designed for the *good of man*; it represents the truest welfare of mankind. With it, man becomes a new creature, and earth is transfigured. It is, indeed, the making of an ideal humanity, and an ideal world. Do we wonder that Jesus stressed the value of the Kingdom? Was He mistaken in His estimate?

The Kingdom, however, has an additional value, at least in the thought of the writer. The Kingdom of God, indeed, is the harmony of the mind as well as of the soul. It is mental peace no less than spiritual peace. Man, upon reflection, stands aghast at his own apparent insignificance in the presence of the teeming millions of the world, in the presence of the ages of the past and of the future, and in the presence of the shortness and uncertainty of the individual life. Looking upon the world of the past, the present and the future, however, the subject of the Kingdom sees nothing to dismay. Man is apparently insignificant, and of few days—but what of that? This world always has been and always will be the Kingdom of God. God, indeed, is sovereign; man may destroy himself, as we have seen, but he cannot destroy God's plan, nor ultimately thwart God's purpose. And there *is* purpose in the drama of Creation. The past has not been aimless, nor is the present goalless. The mind of man, indeed, can detect order and advance in history, slow, tortuous but sure: a movement sometimes forward, sometimes backward, but ever on the whole ascending, never moving in mere cycles. And every individual

has a relation to this purpose. The individual is a factor, albeit, a small factor in the plan, yet very necessary; each individual is, indeed, as it were a stone in a great structure. The Architect is God. Thus the Kingdom of God gives the true perspective from which to view man, life and history. The Kingdom, indeed, is seen to be the intent, the end and the aim of human history. It explains the individual to himself; it is man's apology for existence, the *raison d'être* of his being. It makes intelligible the centuries of the past, and the individual's relation thereto. Further, in exhibiting the vastness of the eternal design, it makes apparent the slowness of the process, the complexity of its movements, and the value of even the most trivial things. It also suggests much as to the glory and the splendor of the consummation of the process and the character of the issue of the age-long development. It extends also into the eternal world and finds place for those who have gone before; the individuals and the nations which are passed away; offering immeasurable opportunity to those who perish with untried and undeveloped powers. The Kingdom of God, indeed, is a conception and a reality, which includes not only the individual and society, but the world and the universe, heaven and earth, time and eternity. Thus the philosophical value of the Kingdom is marked no less than its spiritual value. Again we ask, was Jesus' mistaken in His estimate of the Kingdom's worth?

## CHAPTER X

### THE ALLOY OF THE KINGDOM

IF the parables of the Sower and of the Seed Growing Secretly were a revelation and a disappointment to the Jews, equally, if not more keenly, disappointing were the parables of the Tares and of the Drag-Net<sup>1</sup> Yet these followed logically from the Kingdom's general analogy—growth. All that Jesus taught, in fact, in regard to the development of the Kingdom was logically deducible from this fundamental truth. The Jews, however, not being able to grant the premise, could not accept the conclusions; yet the revelation contained in these

<sup>1</sup> The illustrations are as follows: "Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the house-holder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seeds in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn." (St. Mt. 13:24-31.) We find nothing to commend itself in the idea that the parable of the Tares is an amplification of the parable of the Growing Seed in St. Mk. 4:26-29, and that its exposition was an interpretation emanating from the Evangelist, or in current use among the early disciples.

The parable of the Drag-Net is close akin in spirit, but different in detail. "Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth," (St. Mt. 13:47-50.)

parables (St. Mt. 13:24-31; 47-50) is an essential part of the mystery of the Kingdom. But what is this revelation?

The fondest dream of the Jews, as we have seen, was the Messianic Kingdom. With its advent every wrong would be righted. Evil would no longer triumph, but goodness, according to the standard of the age, would reign unquestioned. The prophets, indeed, had bequeathed this conception to subsequent generations. In fact, it was prophecy—the *coming of unconditioned goodness*. Isaiah, for instance, sang: "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean" (52:1); "Thy people also shall be all righteous" (60:21); "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called, The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it" (35:38). Zephaniah writes: "The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies, neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth." Ezekiel, with all the passion of an ardent soul, pictures the return from exile, and the unification of Israel, and concludes with the glowing prediction of the full realization of the hope cherished for Israel by every prophetic heart: "I will be their God, and they shall be my people." (37:21-27).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> But more convincing is the eloquent utterance which so distinctly colored the subsequent Messianic expectation: "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord; And he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion, and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor

This is certainly an entrancing picture, and men who are enamored of a beautiful vision do not care to have it dispelled. In fact, an additional impetus was given to this conception in the time of Our Lord by John the Baptist.\* An unmistakable part of his prophecy was that One should come to set up the long-awaited Kingdom, "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into his garner: but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire" (St. Mt. 4:12). Thus the Kingdom of God was to be immaculate. This opinion, indeed, is the background of the parables of the Tares and the Drag-Net. In mercy, however, Jesus anticipates the future and dispels the Jewish illusion. To be forewarned is to be forearmed. Had He left the Apostles to face the conditions which would soon confront them, without any adequate preparation, the violent contrast between their expectation and the reality might have proved disastrous to themselves and to their cause. Hence, these parables are also the faithful wounds of a friend.

With the general features of the parables, the Jews were quite familiar. The incidents were not supposititious. All knew, for instance, of the "bearded Darnel" (*Lolium temulentum*), a pernicious grass growing everywhere, which, in the blade, could not be distinguished from the wheat, but only manifested its noxious presence when the ear appeared. Or perhaps, as some think, the tare was not "the bearded darnel," but "creeping wheat" (*Trilicun repens*), which sends its pestilential roots stealthily under the earth until they intertwine with the roots of the wheat. Edersheim tells us that these tares were regarded as degenerate wheat by the Orientals, and suggested to the Jewish mind an idea current in Rabbinism: "the ground had been guilty of fornication before the Judgment of the Flood, so that when wheat was sown, tares sprang up." Nor were the circumstances of the sowing imaginary. Such instances of malicious mischief were not unknown among the Jews. Even Rome was compelled to legislate against similar practices. Travelers also find this form of vengeance in India to-day, and instances of evicted tenants resorting to such measures come to us from Ireland within recent years.

destroy in all thy holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11:1-9).

The intent of the first of the parables was not so apparent, however, as its features. A dim, unconscious understanding of its meaning was present, perhaps; at any rate, a sufficient impression had been made by the recital to cause the disciples to ask for an interpretation, when the privacy of a dwelling gave opportunity. "Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field?" (St. Mt. 13:36). It is also noteworthy that the two parables which more pointedly violated the current Jewish expectation than any others, were those anxiously inquired about by the disciples, and selected by Our Lord for interpretation—the Sower, and the Tares.

Jesus' interpretation of this parable is as follows: "He answered and said unto them: He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the Kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that soweth them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear" (St. Mt. 13:37-44).

Now, the meaning of the parable becomes clear. It is the rude awakening from a sweet dream. The parable refutes the idea of the immaculate character of the Kingdom. Notwithstanding the presence of the Kingdom of God among men, the world will remain for some time the harvest field of good and bad. The Son of Man and Satan alike will sow seed and contend for the harvest, striving for the fruitage of the world at large, and of the individual life. And so cunning will Satan be in his sowing that it will be impossible for some time to differentiate the children of the devil from the children of the Kingdom. However, when the fruit appears, they become distinguishable. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Being distinguished, consternation and surprise ensue. This soon develops into a keen desire to eradicate the Tares. Force seems to be the only available means. They must be pulled up!



But Jesus says—No! That would be most unwise. For while you uproot the Tares, the Wheat is likely to be uprooted. "Let both grow together." At the harvest time, the separation will be made, with absolute justice, and injury to none save the Tares. This, indeed, was the usual custom. "The allusion in the parable is in substantial accord with modern custom in the East, which is to leave the cleaning of the fields until the grain is well advanced toward the harvest, and can be readily distinguished from all other plants. Then the women and children go into the fields and weed them out, so that an Oriental grain farm in harvest time is a model of cleanness and beauty."

In this parable, then, the disciples were brought face to face with reality. If the Kingdom's analogy was *growth*, it must be subject to the laws and the vicissitudes of growth: *it must suffer from weeds and tares*. Indeed, even as the Master spoke, this was the present character of the Kingdom. The opening words of the parable indicate this. They are not, "The Kingdom will be like," or "The Kingdom is like," in an indefinite sense. In the Greek of the original, they are "The Kingdom of God *has become like*," i. e., the Kingdom was already fulfilling the conditions of the parable.<sup>1</sup> Jesus, indeed, was giving His personal experience and observation. There were already tares with the wheat.

While the meaning of this parable is apparently obvious, around it have waged some of the fiercest conflicts of Christendom. Two points present difficulty. What is the meaning of "the field is the world"? What is the significance of Jesus' prohibition against uprooting the tares? Let us consider the words "the field is the world." In interpretations of the parable, these words are usually minimized, if not ignored. They are made to refer to the Christian Church, and the burden of the parable becomes that within the Church both bad and good men will be found. Opposed, however, to this interpretation stands the unequivocal declaration of Jesus—"the field is the world." If words mean anything, the borders of the Church are overstepped here, and the conception of the parable becomes world-wide. It is sometimes asserted, however, that it would have been stupid to narrate such a parable to remind the disciples of the existence of good and bad men

<sup>1</sup> The Aorist tense, ὤμωσθη, is used.

in the world, a fact which they well knew, while it was sensible to teach of their presence in the Church, a fact which they would not appreciate. This, of course, implies an acquaintance with the idea of "the Church" which as yet was wholly foreign to the disciples. Further, we are told that "the world" here simply indicates the extensive character of the Kingdom. This, however, is not convincing.

Let us remember one fact and we shall have no difficulty.

A great need of the disciples, if not their greatest need, was to learn that the world, even with the Kingdom of God present in it, ("the Kingdom of heaven is at hand"), was not to present that ideal aspect with the absence of all evil and the presence of all good which they expected. With the advent of Christ, Satan had indeed fallen as lightning from heaven, and the power of evil had been broken, and all power in heaven and in earth given unto the Son of Man (St. Lu. 10:18); yet, because the rule of God over the world and men was to be voluntary and a gradual growth, indefinitely and until God's own appointed time, would evil mingle with the good, the children of the Kingdom with the children of the Devil. Jesus meant exactly what He said: "the field is the world." Of course, if this condition is true of the world at large, it is also true of the Church. The principle is general: the application to the Church is secondary. Further, a casual glance at the parable will show that in the implied judgment, far more than the judgment of the Christian Church is indicated: it is unmistakably a world judgment.

This conception, however, not only contradicted prevalent Jewish opinion, but it also ran counter to one of the most ineradicable convictions of the human heart. That anything with which God has to do, should contain an admixture of evil is apparently beyond the comprehension of the human mind. If this is God's world, why should evil be in it? Because evil is present, some conclude that it is not God's world. Thus, in the parables of the Tares and the Drag-Net, we stand face to face with the mystery of evil: the mystery which has defied solution, and which will probably remain insoluble, until all things shall become clear. Jesus certainly gives no solution of the problem; He simply seeks to bring good out of evil. Evil to Him is not a mystery to be solved, but a fact to be

reckoned with.

But how shall it be reckoned with, especially as it is manifested in the lives of men? The parable presents this subject for consideration. Shall the tares be weeded out? In discussing this point, we must note that Jesus gave no interpretation of this feature of the parable, consequently we are thrown upon our own resources, and must form our conclusions from the parable itself, without aid from any suggestions of Our Lord. What, then, are our conclusions? They lie along these lines.

Because of the presence of evil in the Kingdom, mankind is surprised and indignant. This feature of the parable is eminently true of life. Indeed, this surprise and indignation is really humanity's tribute to virtue. It is undeniable testimony to the abnormality of present conditions; a protest against the permanence of these conditions; and an emphatic indication that stability cannot be gained unless it is founded upon right and truth, and that such stability will and must be attained ere humanity can be content and cease to be divinely restless. Now this Jesus did not condemn; it was only when this spirit would manifest itself in the *idea of separation* and proceed to the *method of force* that Jesus intervenes with His prohibition. There was to be no separation of the wheat and the tares; the tares were not to be uprooted.<sup>1</sup>

Mankind, however, is slow to learn this truth. The impa-

<sup>1</sup>Certain Roman Catholic expositors have sought to break the force of the Master's prohibition, by declaring the command not to uproot in effect only when there is danger of uprooting the wheat with the tares. This is the reasoning of Thomas Aquinas; while, according to Archbishop Trench, Maldonatus adds that in the specific case, the householder is to judge of the existence of such danger, and that in as much as the Pope *now* represents the householder, the question: "Wilt thou that we go and gather up the tares?" is to be addressed to him, and the subsequent action is to be determined by his answer. He urges, therefore, that Roman Catholic princes imitate the zeal of the servants of the parable, even if such zeal at times demands the restraint of the Pope, rather than be guilty of the indifference to heresy and the heretic exhibited by many. The unsoundness of such reasoning is at once apparent. It is only one of many illustrations of that externalizing tendency which vitiates so much of Roman Catholic exegesis. Such an interpretation plainly contradicts the spirit of the parable. It is only a lame apology for Rome's inquisitorial methods: in other words, it is *ex post facto* interpretation.

tience of the servants, with their idea of separation and their proposition of resort to force, is a perpetually recurring characteristic of the race. How large a part it has played, and is playing, in the life even of the Church is evident at a glance. Many to-day, for instance, remain apart from the Church because, as they assert, there are hypocrites within it. No man, indeed, can deny their existence. Unfortunately, Satan is one of the largest stockholders in the Christian Church; but this is to be expected after the parable of the Tares, and men have no right to demand absolute perfection of the Church. It is contrary to the world principle: life is everywhere a parable of the Tares and the Wheat. But, taking a wider view, we see that well-nigh every schism among Christians has resulted from misguided zeal and an erroneous conception of duty, in which the matter of pristine importance seemed to be the separation of the Wheat from the Tares. The aim has been the impossible one of founding an unalloyed communion, in which spirituality should have undisputed sway and faith know no admixture of error. And every schismatic movement has signally failed to do that which it set out to do. Perhaps measurably free from impurities for awhile, evil and error soon creep in to mar the fair aspect, and to sow again the seeds of dissension and strife. What is the result? Only another schism, only another attempt, doomed to failure as soon as attempted, to have a pure communion morally or intellectually. The idea of the servants is, in fact, the multiplication of schisms.

This parable is also, if our judgment be correct, the condemnation of heresy-hunting. The knowledge of God's truth, no less than the sovereignty of God is a growth, and being a growth, it must be subject to the laws and vicissitudes of growth. Satan sows false ideas, no less readily than false principles of living. The world being what it is, immorality and falsehood must be intermingled with morality and truth. The Church will also show this lamentable admixture. Hence it is as foolish to expect, and as impossible to have, a Church with no intellectual error, no unsoundness of faith, as it is to expect to have a Church free from moral unsoundness. Intellectual Tares will grow with the Wheat of Truth. And men are no more justified in forcibly eradicating the intel-

lectual Tares, than they are in eradicating the moral Tares. Indeed, there is no more pitiable spectacle in any age than the ecclesiastical blood-hound, keen on the scent of heresy. The spirit of the servants, however, is essentially the spirit of the persecutor also. Contrast this anxious care for truth, with its stereotyped dogmas, inerrant councils, infallible Popes, and remorseless Inquisitions, with the sublime trust in truth which characterized Jesus as He entrusted the revelation of Heaven to the tender mercies of men—unsystematized, unsterotyped, even *unwritten*, without council or Pope or Inquisition. Truth indeed, as we have seen, is self-propagating, and it perpetually chants the paean of victory. The preventive of heresy is the affirmation of truth; the corrective of heresy is the fuller affirmation of truth. Indeed, it may be said that the cause of morality is certainly never helped by the inquisitorial method; the cause of truth is always the loser by it. In fact, the endeavor to uphold truth by inquisitorial methods indicates a loss of faith alike in God, in humanity and in truth. It is really distrust of faith; a practical denial of faith—a doubt as to the winning power of truth.

Returning now to the fundamental thought of this parable, we see that it gives insight into history both Ancient and Modern. History, indeed, is the parable of the Tares and the Wheat. Every department of human activity, also, serves to illustrate the principle disclosed in the parable. The law of the Tares and the Wheat is the law of life, domestic, commercial, social, political, and religious. Life everywhere is a battle of ideas, and a struggle for ideals. Yet this condition will not always prevail. There will be a *dénouement*. There will be a harvest. "*Let both grow together until the harvest.*"

To accentuate this, and to prevent the utter bewilderment and dejection of His followers in His own, and in every age, Jesus narrates the parable of the Drag-Net. The parable of the Tares emphasizes the present commingling of the good and the evil, and cautions against impatience and resort to force in attempting separation. The parable of the Drag-Net indicates with emphatic promise, that a final and thorough separation, if such must be made, will be made by God, and thus reveals why any attempt on the part of man to do this is futile and unreasonable. "Vengeance is mine: I will



repay, saith the Lord." The very construction of the parable in its omissions, as well as in its statements, indicates its theme: the *present* admixture, and the *future* separation. The Kingdom of God is like a Drag-Net. The word is *Sagene*, which means "a large fishing net," used to catch fish which swam in shoals. Similarly, the Kingdom of God is cast into the sea of life and embraces humanity, gathering in all sorts and conditions of men. When the net is full, and is hauled up on the shore of eternity, God will do the work of separation, which men are so eager to do here. Such, we believe, is the interpretation of these two parables of Our Lord.

It only remains to add that the parables of the Tares and the Drag-Net are the terrible indictment of much in life, and of a vast deal of ecclesiastical history. The parable of the Tares, with its theory of separation, is indeed the life-like picture of the actual Church in many ages. The Drag-Net which gathers of every kind, is the likeness of the ideal Church. The former is Ecclesiastical History; the latter should have been Ecclesiastical History. The practical truth of both parables, however, is well expressed by St. Paul: "But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor and some to dishonor." (St. Tim. 2:20.)

At the conclusion of these parables, Jesus, addressing His auditors, "saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord. Then said He unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, is like unto a man that is a householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old" (St. Mt. 13:51-52). Apt, indeed, was the remark. As they listened to the Master's words, the disciples were indeed bringing forth out of their treasure—the Kingdom of God—conceptions and ideas, both new and old.



## CHAPTER XI

### THE EXTENT OF THE KINGDOM

ONE who has followed our study thus far would not expect Jesus to lend the weight of His authority to the popular conception of the extent of the Kingdom of God. Jesus, in fact, taught the universal character of the Kingdom. As soon as this statement is made, however, a well-known fact arises in apparent repudiation. Jesus, Himself, hardly set foot beyond the borders of His country, and personally confined His labors to His countrymen, while the Apostles imitated His example, at least for a time. This is evident from Jesus' own life; from His instructions to the disciples before their first missionary tour: "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (St. Mt. 10:5-6); and in the subsequent conduct of the Apostles after their Master's death.

These facts, however, do not indicate the exclusive or sectarian character of the Kingdom. The precedence accorded to the Jews is more easily explained upon other grounds. For instance, the time for the mission to the Gentiles had not come. Again, the great yearning love of Jesus for His own people—a love by no means inconsistent with that borne toward all mankind—would also prompt such precedence. Further, a beginning had to be made somewhere. The Kingdom could not be founded *everywhere* at once. Naturally, then, the soil of Judaism was the most available. Nor had the Apostles as yet outgrown their national prejudices in measure sufficient to warrant the inauguration of a world-wide mission. Their knowledge, too, and insight into the nature, laws and operation of the Kingdom was exceedingly limited; hence it was better for them at the first to proclaim to their countrymen with John the Baptist, the simple truth—"the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

The reason for this precedence, however, which most strongly commends itself, is this. Israel as a nation had been chosen by God for a specific work, as we have seen. Opportunity after opportunity had been given for the fulfilment of this mission, but the nation had always proved a stubborn and a stiff-necked people. Now Israel's last opportunity had come. The people had mistreated the servants of the Lord of the Vineyard; yet would they not reverence His Son? (St. Mt. 21). God is patient with nations, as well as with individuals, giving them many chances, and overlooking much obduracy. Will not the nation at last awaken and respond? To give the nation ample opportunity was the purpose of Jesus' three vigorous, carefully planned and systematic preaching tours throughout the land. The Jews were to be converted, if possible; then they as a people were to convert the world. They were to become the fulfilment of prophecy—"a light to lighten the Gentiles." Thus a far more effective agency would be wielded for the establishment of the Kingdom than the labors, however zealous, of individual men. But this hope was disappointed. The parables of the Vineyard and of the Marriage of the King's Son were prophetic of truth. Human nature will dwell rather upon the thought of election than of vocation, of privilege than of duty, of self than of others.<sup>1</sup>

Notwithstanding the precedence of the Jew, however, the Kingdom of God, in the view of Jesus, was "universal in design and scope." We have His most explicit testimony that the Kingdom would know no territorial or racial limitations. If we may believe Saint Luke, this catholicity of sympathy manifested itself at the very outset of Jesus' career. Upon delivering the Inaugural Address at Nazareth, the Master became convinced that "no prophet is accepted in his own country." He was comforted in the thought, however,

<sup>1</sup> That the precedence of the Jew was seemly and fitting, and in line with St. Paul's subsequent saying, "To the Jew first, and also to the Greek!" (Rom. 1:16) is evident from Jesus' own words. In St. Mt. 8:12, Jesus calls the Jews "Sons of the Kingdom," while St. Mk. 21:43 shows the priority accorded to the Jews: "Therefore the Kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." While this passage indicates Israel's precedence, it is also the death-warrant of exclusive and sectarian hopes.

that a prophet would be received outside His own land, and cited in support of His contention the reception of Elijah by the widow of Sidonian Sarepta, and Elisha's cure of the leprosy of the Syrian Naaman (St. Lu. 4:25-27; I Ki. 17; II Ki. 5). This incident also serves to show the temper of the Jews in regard to the overstepping of the accepted national limitations of the Kingdom. "And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong."

The universal sympathy of Jesus is also indicated in His attitude toward the Syro-Phoenician woman, notwithstanding the singularity of its mode of expression, and in His willingness to converse with the woman of Samaria. Racial limitations are also distinctly transcended in the teaching of St. Matthew 8:11-12.<sup>1</sup> One of the greatest privileges accompanying the Messianic Kingdom, according to Jewish thought, was "participating in splendid festive entertainments along with the patriarchs of the nation." This thought was the source of immense satisfaction to the Jew, while it was made to militate against the Gentiles, being understood in this sense: "In the future world (God said) I will spread a great table for you, which the Gentiles shall see and be ashamed." In contradistinction to this, Jesus declares that many Gentiles will become believers, and will have part in the joyous happiness of the patriarchs of old, while those who apparently have every right to the feast, shall be in the darkness "which is outside the (illuminated) banqueting hall and in despair."

Plain hints as to the universality of the Kingdom are found also in the wide-extending branches of the parable of the Mustard Seed, and in the parable of the Drag-Net, which is thrown not only around *one* nation as heretofore, but around all peoples, and gathers "fish" of every kind and character. The parable of the Good Samaritan also has the note of universality.

<sup>1</sup>"And I say unto you, that many shall come from the East and the West, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

"Who is my neighbor?" asks the disputatious lawyer. "Every one whom you can serve," replies Jesus. Humanity is to measure its opportunity for service only by man's need of service. The satirical rebuke of Jewish reasoning as it is revealed in this parable in the unsympathetic attitude of the priest and the Levite, professional and "ordained" religionists, and the exaltation of the charity of the unorthodox Samaritan, was a stinging blow to Pharisaic religion, and exhibited from the Jewish standpoint a most dangerous latitude and laxity. Truly, the independence of Jesus was marvelous.

Full of interest also is the visit of certain Greeks to Jesus during the sad week of the Crucifixion (St. Jno. 12:20-22). Their coming, Jesus regarded as a kind of first fruits of the rich harvest which He was to gather beyond the borders of Israel. His joy and His words, especially the impressive and closing declaration, are significant: "I, if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto me" (vs. 32). Worthy of note also are the words spoken, when anointed with the very precious ointment by Mary at Bethany (St. Mt. 26:6-12): "Verily, I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her."

These incidental references of a busy life, however, ultimately merge into broad and explicit declarations. Consider, for instance, the words of the Great Commission: "Go ye therefore, and teach *all nations*, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you" (St. Mt. 28:19). These words are also important: "But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and we shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Other references might be cited, but these will suffice to show that the Kingdom in Jesus' thought was unlimited territorially and racially. While a precedence was accorded to the Jews, the restriction, as had been the intention with Israel of old, was but the prelude to universalism.

This is not all, however. All social barriers also were to fall before the Kingdom. This the Jews simply could not understand. Caste held high carnival among them. While

the nation as a whole was the aristocracy of God, the Pharisees were an aristocracy within an aristocracy. The Jews, indeed, floundered perpetually among fallacious distinctions, ever drawing the cords where they ought not, and failing to tighten them where they ought. The Kingdom of God, however, as it was presented by Jesus, repudiated this conventionality totally. It was not intended alone for those esteeming themselves the "unco guid" or the "rigidly righteous": all humanity could enter its portals. The door was open wide. Indeed, when the Kingdom graciously received Levi, the publican, Magdalene the harlot, and the dying thief, the death of class distinctions and prejudices was signified so far as the Kingdom of God was concerned. This fact is astounding, not only in its indication of the universality of the Kingdom, but from the unmistakable hint which Jesus gave, that among the outcast and the fallen the Kingdom would *find its most propitious soil, and reap its richest harvest*. Why Jesus regarded such persons as the more propitious soil is seen in St. Luke 7:36-48, and especially in the words: "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: *but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.*"

Jesus, indeed, always manifested keen interest in the undesirable classes. In Matthew's house, He seems to have attended a feast of publicans and sinners, which was arranged especially that He might meet with them (St. Lu. 5:29). His conduct in this respect often gave rise to scandal. The questionable "respectability" and "orthodoxy" of the day anxiously inquired, "How is it that he eateth and drinketh with sinners?" (St. Mk. 2:15-17), and contemptuously denominated Him "the friend of publicans and sinners," and "a wine-bibber and a glutton." Happily, however, for truth's sake, Jesus treated the current conventionality with supreme disdain. Yet there was nothing of narrowness in His sympathies. He dined with the influential Pharisee (St. Lu. 7:37) upon invitation, as readily as with the publican, showing that if He had no prejudice against the outcast, He entertained no demagogic hatred of the rich and well-to-do.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The distinctness with which Jesus taught the removal of all social barriers to entrance into the Kingdom is fully revealed in the parable and discourse recorded in St. Luke 14:12-24.



Our conclusion as to the universality of the Kingdom has now been reached after consideration of the explicit teaching of Jesus. It is equally evident, however, in His implicit teaching. *A priori* reasoning here is as effective as *a posteriori* reasoning. The universality of the Kingdom inheres, indeed, in the nature of both God and man. One great outstanding fact of Jesus' teaching is the Fatherhood of God. In common with mankind He believed in God, although His idea of God was not the common idea of His age, nor is it the popular idea to-day. Indeed, the immense superiority of Jesus' conception is only realized when contrasted with the conceptions of His contemporaries. While the intelligence of Rome was divided in allegiance between atheism and pantheism, which alike represented violent reactions from unworthy ideas of Deity, the populace mocked the rites of their ancestral religion, and attributed to the Gods the licentiousness and vulgar *amours* of men. Out of this hideous confusion arose the tendency to deify the emperors—the most potent representatives of power then within the ken of man. Thus was Augustus deified by decree of the Roman Senate. The worship of the Emperor, indeed, soon became the universal worship of the Empire. Temples, with statues of the new-found God, were erected in Gaul, Spain, Africa, Egypt, Palestine and Greece, where, through priesthoods and an elaborate cultus, subjects paid divine honors to the God of the world. Yet this God himself might be the victim of a superstition as base as that which compelled Tiberius at the sound of thunder, to seek refuge in a crown of laurel because "it was denied that this kind of leaf was ever touched by lightning," or which saw a mighty Cæsar, flushed with victory, pitifully repeating a magical formula against a feared Nemesis, upon entering his chariot. The background offered for Jesus' idea of God by the Gentile world was dark indeed.

The solitary oasis in this desert of infidelity and superstition was found among the most abject of peoples and despised of races. The Jew in Palestine and in the little Synagogue which soon appeared wherever he had gone voluntarily, or had been carried a captive, notwithstanding the excrescences of Pharisaism and Sadduceeism, presented to the world in the translucent pages of his Scriptures the idea of a God who was primarily One and a Person; so august as to defy representa-



tion; Omnipotent and Omniscient; Eternal, and in nature of Transcendent Purity, the inveterate enemy of sin; who had selected a solitary nation of the earth to represent Him to the peoples of the earth. Such, in brief, was the Jewish idea of God. Now all that was true in the Jewish conception, Jesus borrowed, and upon it reared the imposing superstructure of His own idea. It was His distinctive contribution, however, which gave to the idea a conquering power, never possible to the Jewish conception. This contribution may be summed up in the words, "*God is Father.*" And to understand the meaning of this we must interpret it as, "*God is Love.*"

The Jews recognized the Fatherhood of God chiefly in two distinct senses. He was a Father in the sense of Creator or Progenitor. He was also a Father in that He was interested in, and loved Israel, and, in later times, especially her King. This conception, however, fell far short of the splendid view entertained by Jesus. In His thought, God was not only the Infinite Creator, but the Infinite Father who was keenly concerned about *all* creation and full of love for *all* things. With Jesus, this passionate regard of God extended to even the smallest things: the grass of the fields, the birds of the air. "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them" (St. Mt. 6:26; cf. 28, 30 vs.).<sup>1</sup> If God's solicitude for the trivial is so manifest, we may expect a most pronounced regard for *Man*. "Are ye not much better than they?" asks Jesus, in fact, of the disciples after describing God's love for the fowls of the air (St. Mt. 6:26). It was formerly debated with much heat whether God was the Father of all men in the sense of love, or only of Christians, i.e., of those who recognized their sonship and obeyed the Father. How this question could arise, it is difficult to understand in view of Jesus' teaching. That God is the Universal Father is, indeed, an axiom of His revelation. Yet that this Fatherhood does not mean the same thing to all men is also an integral part of His truth, as the late Professor Bruce so admirably points out

<sup>1</sup> Science, to-day, as it follows the footsteps of the Creator, and unfolds more and more the methods of His thoughtful providence, is furnishing data of invaluable assistance in justly appreciating this teaching of Jesus.

in his book, "The Kingdom of God." An earthly father, in fact, finds the fulfilment of his fatherhood conditioned in many ways by the bearing of his son. The full love of the parent can only be bestowed upon a child who in turn reciprocates the parental affection. Dutiful sonship is a necessity to perfect Fatherhood. Hence God, although the Father of all men, cannot be a Father to the evil and to the righteous *in the same degree*.

Professor Bruce notes, however, that the Fatherhood of God toward *all* men expends itself along two distinct yet related lines of affection—regard for both the temporal and the spiritual needs of man. His careful providence for the *temporal necessities* of the sinner is indicated by Jesus in St. Matthew 5: 45: "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." The perfection of the Deity itself is illustrated in the blessing bestowed upon those who curse Him. The solicitude of God over the *spiritual condition* of the sinful man is the preeminent thought of the exquisite parables recorded in the fifteenth chapter of St. Luke,—verily a miniature Gospel in themselves. The burden of these parables—the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, and the Lost Son—may be expressed in the words of St. Matthew 18: 14: "Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish." Sin, though it be as black as Hell itself, and as malodorous, cannot separate the erring child from the affection of the Heavenly Parent. He seeks the lost, and looks again and again for the return of the wanderer. The conduct of Our Lord also reveals the affection of the Father-God, no less than His words. Were we deprived of the latter, we could draw a just inference as to the universal Fatherhood of God from the graciousness of Jesus' bearing, His insight, and His sympathy.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> To a dastardly violation of the shepherding quality inherent in true religion, we owe the teaching of the Master about "The Good Shepherd." Incensed because a former blind man had come to believe in the divine power of the restorer of his sight, the Pharisees proceeded forthwith to excommunicate him. Jesus, hearing of their action, sought for the poor fellow, and comforted him with the knowledge that He alone was the door through which men could enter into eternal life; while He unsparingly condemned the ignorance of those who, instead of *seeking* the spiritual welfare

The care of God for the temporal needs of the saints, or children of the Kingdom, Jesus sets forth at length in a passage which we have already considered. Perhaps it would be well to quote it, however. Even long familiarity with it has not impressed its meaning upon Christian thought. "Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (for after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (St. Mt. 6:31-33). Here, indeed, as we have seen, is the absolute promise that if *any* person will make the sovereignty of God the *sole aim* in life, God will attend to it that food, drink, and raiment are had in abundance. Finally, the devotion of the Father to the *spiritual* needs of the child of the Kingdom is best seen in the gift of the Holy Spirit—the Infinite Spirit coming into touch with the finite spirit of man, refreshing, guiding, developing. But more of this anon.<sup>1</sup>

In view of this revelation of the character of God, we see that the Kingdom of God must be universal in aim. The God of Jesus could be satisfied with nothing else. The universality of the Kingdom, however, is as inherent in the nature of man

of the man, turned him adrift. To this procedure, Jesus opposed Himself as "The Door and The Good Shepherd" (St. John 9:10).

<sup>1</sup> That God would not always appear even to spiritual insight as a Father, Jesus well knew. He adverts to the fact in the suggestive parables of "The Selfish Neighbor" and "The Unjust Judge" (St. Lu. 11:5-13; 18:1-5). These parables, however, do not in the least impugn the Fatherhood of God. They only represent the manner in which God *seems* to act at times. Why the Deity permits this impression, no man can tell. Christianity does not answer wholly all the questions in heaven and earth, yet it does throw all needful light upon them. Of course, the truthfulness of this idea of God may be denied, yet it is evident that Jesus claimed to give an authoritative revelation. "No man knows the Son, but the Father; *neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him*" (St. Mt. 11:27). Again: "Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? *he that hath seen me hath seen the Father*; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (St. John 14:9-10).

as in the character of God.

Jesus of Nazareth, indeed, had the ability to see things in their just proportion. While the world of His day measured the value of man by some accident of birth, genius, power, wealth or station, fastening its gaze upon the extraordinary and the exceptional, Jesus measured the value of man simply by the gift of *being*, affixing His attention upon the ordinary and the general.<sup>1</sup> In the thought of Jesus, *every* man was made in the image of God. Nothing more was needed to dignify his nature; nothing additional could dignify his nature. Although stripped of every accident of existence, and as naked as nakedness itself, man was yet richly clothed with the habiliments of Deity. Each individual was accordingly of immense value.

Proof of this is easily forthcoming. "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" or, as St. Luke says, "his own self?" "Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (St. Mk. 8: 36-37; St. Mt. 16: 26; St. Lu. 9: 25). Here the whole world is weighed in the balances against a single human soul, and is found wanting. Consider again the passage quoted above, and its context. "Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that *one* of these little ones should perish" (St. Mt. 18: 14). Man's value is also apparent in such sayings as these: "The very hairs of your head are all numbered;" "Ye are of more value than many sparrows;" "How much then is a man better than a sheep?" (St. Mt. 10: 30; 12: 12). Especially important is the declaration of Our Lord, found in St. Matthew 5:29-30: "If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell" (cf. St. Mt. 18: 8-9; St. Mk. 9: 43-47; St. Lu. 12: 13-21).

This passage is not to be understood literally, of course. The language is highly figurative, yet the more forceful because

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrews offered the only apparent exception to this rule. Every Hebrew was honored by virtue of his birthright. Yet, as has been shown repeatedly, "It was Hebrew nature, rather than human nature, which even to him possessed intrinsic grandeur."

figurative. The right eye and hand represent what is most valuable and useful. The words "offend thee" really mean "cause thee to stumble." The idea is that some one is walking in the path of rectitude, when suddenly something causes the person to stumble in his path, and fall into wickedness. "Pluck it out," "cut it off" and "cast it from thee" are expressions of decided action, and call emphatically for the removal of the cause of the stumbling. To interpret this language literally would be to obey the letter of the law, and to ignore the spirit. Suppose, however, for the sake of argument that we could have an eyeless, footless, and handless humanity, would it be a *sinless* humanity? Would not the heart still remain? And is it not out of the heart that the issues of life and death proceed? The organs and the senses of the body are indeed God-given, legitimate, valuable and useful. Yet they may become the organs of guilt, "the inlets of temptation, the outlets of surrender."

It is only when we interpret this saying of Jesus' as a figure of speech that its significance really dawns upon us. The eye means the thing seen, the hand, the thing done; together they represent perhaps the active and the passive sides of our nature. And Jesus' thought is that whenever anything that we see or do causes us to sin, it is to be summarily renounced. This is not that hideous caricature of Christianity which calls itself asceticism, but simply the necessary renunciation of self which inheres in all true religion. It is the Cross which wins the Crown. And this willingness to suffer dire loss is profitable because it ministers to man's eternal gain. Our minds are likely to consider only the present; Jesus considers both the present and the future. Eternity is longer than time. Present loss is set over against future gain. Jesus is appealing for the interests of the higher life. Self-indulgence means self-destruction. Hence the emphatic declaration of the passage: "Partial loss in this world rather than total loss in the next." Could language more forcibly indicate the value of each human soul?

Such teaching and conduct, as we have described, bring forcibly to light Jesus' interest in man simply *as man*. Riches, station, religion, and even sin, were not considered primary factors in determining individual worth. There was a value and an importance attached to man simply as man. Human society is undoubtedly a heterogeneous mass, and embraces "all



sorts and conditions of men." But, in the thought of Jesus, the unifying bond is manhood. The average person to-day—even the average Christian, we fear—notes and dwells upon the rank and the grades which separate men. His whole view of life, and his conduct are conditioned by these. Jesus, however, let us remember, dwelt solely upon the common manhood which unites men. He was the Incarnation of the Democratic Spirit. With Him, in fact, this spirit was born into the world with power, and through Him it is transforming the world. His, indeed, was the catholicity of the very sympathies of God. This is the more remarkable when we consider (humanly speaking) the lowliness of His birth, and the character of His early environment—the carpenter shop of obscure Nazareth. While such surroundings would usually beget sympathy with the lowly, they would also mean distrust, suspicion, and dislike of the more favored classes. This, however, was not true of Jesus. Even His bitterest enemies recognized that He was "no respecter of persons." High and low, rich and poor, reputable and disreputable, were treated alike by Him, and all simply as *men*. The Church's failure—not theoretical, but practical—to imitate the Master in this has been a most important factor in the present alienation of the masses. When the Church shall follow the example of Jesus, the common people will hear it gladly, as they heard the Master of old. When the clergy, indeed, show no greater respect for the rich than the poor, the great than the humble, for the ecclesiastical dignitary, gowned, hooded, bedecked and bedizzened, than for the poorly dressed laboring man, and shall occupy the lofty and impregnable position of Jesus, from which they treat all men with that high respect due to *man*, even if partiality must be shown, reverencing more highly the laborer than the dignitary, if his manhood be of a nobler type, then will the world believe in the Christianity of the Church, for it will recognize the Christianity of Christ. His great assumption was that the dignity of *manhood*—the gift of God—was infinitely greater than any earthly dignity, religious or secular—the gift of men. This, at least, was the pure democracy of Jesus. To the eternal shame of the Church, be it said, it is not even in reasonable measure the democracy of the Church.

Jesus' idea, indeed, of the essential value of human nature



*in itself*, when stripped of all superadded honors, gifts, and dignities, has always amazed mankind. Indeed, to esteem "a nobody" is ever an offense in the eyes of a Pharisaic world. But when honor and esteem are persisted in toward those who are stripped of even naked respectability, and clothed with the ignominy of evil living, humanity's confusion becomes worse confounded. The degraded, the fallen, the outcast however, as we have seen, were the objects of Jesus' pity and love. His regard for them is fully revealed in the parables of the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, and the Lost Son. Here we see that those whom the Pharisees thought a rubbish pile ready for ignition, Jesus regarded as a rich harvest to be reaped. Indeed, their very condition made a tremendous appeal to Him. In the Lost Sheep, for instance, He sees the *folly* and the *helplessness* of the lost soul; in the Lost Coin, the utter uselessness of the most useful of all things—money, when lost, is made to reveal the absolute *waste* of the lost life; while in the exquisite story of the Lost Son—an optimistic biography of a sinner—Jesus discloses the *self-conscious misery* and *degradation* of the lost being. To Jesus, indeed, humanity was splendid, though in ruins.

The surpassing value of human nature, however, has been shown in the preceding pages also in that Jesus regarded it as the congenial soil for the Kingdom of God. He regarded man as the possessor of both a moral and an intellectual nature, which was responsive to the deepest spiritual truths of God. His conduct toward man always proceeded upon the presupposition so beautifully expressed by Browning:

"But friends,  
Truth is within ourselves; it takes no rise  
From outward things, whate'er you may believe:  
There is an inmost centre in us all,  
Where truth abides in fulness; and around  
Wall upon wall, the gross flesh hems it in,  
This perfect, clear perception—which is truth;  
A baffling and perverting carnal mesh  
Blinds it and makes all error; and 'to know.'  
Rather consists in opening out a way  
Whence the imprisoned splendor may escape,  
Than in effecting entrance for a light  
Supposed to be without."

Preeminently, however, is Jesus' idea of the dignity of man seen in His unequivocal belief in man's immortality. He said little about this, it is true. It is, nevertheless, like His belief in God, an axiomatic truth of His teaching. There was no need for special stress upon the subject, for His countrymen believed in the truth—all, indeed, except the Sadducean worldlings—thus offering a striking contrast to the great Gentile world, in which there was such patent disbelief, or painful uncertainty with regard to the life after death. Even a Herod, aroused by the increasing reputation of Jesus, spoke of Him as John the Baptist risen from the dead. On one occasion, however, our Lord did express Himself unequivocally. The Sadducees, seeking to discredit the popular belief in immortality, ask Him, if a woman shall have been married seven times, to whom shall she belong after the resurrection. Jesus' reply is convincing: "And Jesus answering said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God? For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels which are in heaven. And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err" (St. Mk. 12:24-28).

This reply at once rebukes incredulity as to the *power* of God, and declares that God is not the God of the dead, but of *the living*, clearly implying *that all live unto Him*. The unbelief, indeed, which hesitates to accept a future life for man in the face of the marvelous evidences of the Divine Power, displayed in the visible creation, and which is blind to the implication of their Scriptures, is to Jesus absurd, and worthy of censure. Faith, however, in the immortality of man, even though it were unexpressed by Jesus, is the essential presupposition of all His teaching. Without this cardinal truth, His entire teaching is aimless and preposterous. Thus we find that the Kingdom of God must be universal in extent and aim, in view of the essential dignity of human nature, no less than in view of the character of God.

Finally, the character of the Kingdom itself predicates its

universality. Inward and spiritual primarily, its extent is alone conditioned by the presence or the absence of similar qualities. The necessary qualifications for entrance belong to man simply as man. External considerations have no weight. The essential qualities, as we have seen, are those of mind and heart as set forth in the Beatitudes. These may belong to the Greek as well as to the Jew, to the bond and to the free, to the uncircumcised and the circumcised, to rich and poor, humble and exalted, learned and unlearned alike. This fundamental truth of the Kingdom has been compelled, however, to wage incessant warfare against the inveterate national, racial, and class prejudices of humanity from the beginning. The struggle of Paul with the Judaizers in the first century, and the conduct—honoring the rich and neglecting the poor—against which James inveighs in his Epistle, were but the first thunderous tones of a mighty battle which has been in progress down the centuries. Even to-day this concept of the Kingdom is to a great extent but a beautiful theory in our world, our national and our individual life. The battle is by no means won. The North against the South, the East against the West, the white man against the black man, the rich against the poor, labor against capital, knowledge despising ignorance, nation against nation, civilization against barbarism, Christendom versus Heathendom, amply attest that, while much has been accomplished, much remains to be accomplished. God, however, is no respecter of persons. The Kingdom is intended for *all* men, and all men are worthy of the Kingdom. Surely there is great need to-day of that sterling Christian manhood which shall protest without fear or favor against the tendency in Church and State which respects position rather than humanity—the tendency upon which every tyranny in the State and every despotism in the Church has reared its superstructure, and by means of which they have lived.

There is, in conclusion, only one restriction upon the extent of the Kingdom of God: the inability or the unwillingness of the individual to comply with the conditions imposed for entrance. Despite the intent of the Kingdom, it is not universally accepted. When measured by the ideal or goal, the results indeed are disappointing; but when measured by the humanity and the civilization with which the Kingdom has had to deal,

the results are most encouraging. While men willingly admit that the times are "out of joint," while they acknowledge the marvelous harmony in which the universe of God proceeds; while they see that the world of nature is a sequence of laws well ordered and harmoniously followed; that everywhere is concord save in the world of man; that the whole creation may be compared to a superb organ, mighty in size, perfect in construction, and exquisite in tone, but with a single key out of tune, which spoils the music of the whole, yet they will not take the proper steps to remedy the discord. The Universe, the world of nature, follow their appointed law: they *are* the Kingdom of God, the sphere in which His rule is obeyed. It is not so, however, in the world of man. Here we have—

"a jarring and a dissonant thing  
Amid this general dance and minstrelsy."

The remedy for this vast discord, of course, is the universal extension of the Kingdom—the *sovereignty of God*. The world's reception of the Kingdom alone prevents the universality of the celestial harmony. The refusal of Adam, however, is still the popular ideal. Creation is a divided realm. Will there ever be union? Will the extension of the Kingdom ever be complete, and God be the supreme and the unquestioned head?

Translated into terms of individuality, the question is, Who will share ultimately in the Kingdom of God? Will all men be saved, or only some men? Will the Kingdom be entirely successful, or only partially so? Will God rule over all men ultimately by Love, or will He be compelled to rule over some in an eternal hell by compulsion? Questions of tragic importance thus confront us. Can we answer any, or all of them?

It is evident that Jesus reveals the ultimate triumph of the Kingdom of God. While specific evidence is not wanting, the whole trend of His thought and teaching is in this direction. St. Paul truly represents His Master in the glowing language of I Cor. 15: 24-29, and Eph. 1: 10. The Kingdom will triumph. But *how* and *to what extent*? are the crucial questions. Will mankind submit to the sovereignty of God? If not, what will be the fate of the rebellious? Several theories have been set forth to solve this problem. Universalism, the common view

of the ultimate separation of the good and the evil, and Conditional Immortality alike offer their program. The very contrariety of these views however, with the facts upon which they are based, indicates, we think, the impossibility of arriving at any solution of our problem which possesses certainty or even probability. Jesus did not answer our question, and involved in its determination are the Love of God and the Free-will of Man. Who can say what these may ultimately accomplish?

“So I read  
The constant action of celestial powers  
Mixed into waywardness of mortal men,  
Whereof no sage’s eye can trace the course  
And see the close.  
Fruitful result, O sage!  
Certain uncertainty.”

## CHAPTER XII

### THE TIME OF THE KINGDOM

IN the popular belief of to-day, the Kingdom of God is regarded almost exclusively as *future* in time. An assertion of the present existence of the Kingdom on the earth would, indeed, provoke a smile of derision in many quarters; for the advent of the Kingdom is popularly identified with the end of the world. The present life is to give place to the future, or eternal life, and *that* will be the Kingdom of God. This view, however, is extremely defective, and overlooks the fundamental import of Christianity. Numerous evils, also, are the offspring of this conception. The Christian religion is emasculated. The world that is, and the world that is to come, are widely separated in thought. The religious and the secular are divorced. Men value the future life, and despise, or minimize, the present life. We have Monasticism perverting Catholicism, and Asceticism stifling Christianity. The social and the altruistic aspect of the Christian religion is sacrificed to the individual, the egoistic aspect. The world is flooded with so-called Christian societies, whose origin, aim, and end is selfishness. "The Imitation of Christ" of Thomas À. Kempis, with its emphasis of personal and ignoring of social religion, is the ideal of thousands, in contradistinction to the Christianity of Christ. In fact, the inevitable outcome of this idea is the degradation of Christianity to the veritable level of an Insurance Society, which simply issues policies in favor of Heaven. If, however, this view of "the time" of the Kingdom is inadequate, what are we to believe about this subject? To know the truth, we must consult the teaching of Jesus.

A cursory glance, however, at the New Testament seems to reveal glaring inconsistency and contradiction in Our Lord's teaching. Jesus speaks, apparently, of the Kingdom now as present in time, and again as future. This fact, indeed, has given rise to several theories. It is contended by some that,



in His early ministry, Jesus expected the sudden and miraculous inauguration of the Kingdom, and that later He was made perforce to see that the Kingdom could come only after a long period of development. Others maintain that He always conceived of the Kingdom as *future*, and that whatever reference there is to it in His teaching as present is merely anticipatory. These explanations, however, are not convincing. That Jesus spoke of the time of the Kingdom in terms which seem to be inconsistent and contradictory is undeniable, but that His teaching is inconsistent is by no means evident. On the contrary, He spoke of the Kingdom as both present and future, because the very nature of the Kingdom demanded that He do so. This will become apparent as we proceed. Let us now, however, consider the testimony for the *present* character of the Kingdom.

While the Jews were utterly unable to see that the Kingdom of God, so loudly heralded by John, and by Jesus, was at hand, inasmuch as their conception of the Kingdom effectually blinded their eyes, yet the Kingdom was at hand. "The Kingdom of God is among you," was Jesus' reply to the Pharisees, who asked, "when the Kingdom of God cometh?" (St. Lu. 17:21). "The Kingdom of God is come upon you," was His suggestion also to the Pharisees, who accused Him of casting out devils through Beelzebub, their prince (St. Lu. 11:20). He also speaks of the Kingdom as being taken by violence.<sup>1</sup> The present character of the Kingdom is also indicated in the remark made upon the return of the Seventy: "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven" (St. Lu. 10:18). The Kingdom, indeed, as a *present fact* has confronted us throughout our entire study. Where this is not explicitly stated, it is implied. It is the presupposition of the parables of Growth—the Sower, the Seed Growing Secretly, the Mustard Seed. The parable of the Leaven is meaningless unless the Kingdom is present, and acting like leaven. The parables of the Tares and the Drag-Net also represent the Kingdom's admixture of good and bad in this present world. The Beatitudes, again, noticeably imply the present possession of the Kingdom of God. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs *is* the kingdom of

<sup>1</sup> "And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force" (St. Mt. 11:12; St. Lu. 16:16).

heaven." Jesus also speaks of persons as now entering the Kingdom. The publicans and harlots enter before the chief priests and elders (St. Mt. 21:31). Men, again, are urged to seek the Kingdom before all things (St. Mt. 6:36), evidently implying a present quest. Woe is pronounced upon the Scribes and Pharisees because they "shut up the kingdom of heaven against men, for ye enter not in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to enter" (St. Mt. 23:13). Mankind, again, is urged to enter into *Life*. "Narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (St. Mt. 7:13-14).

This use of the term "life" is very interesting and suggestive. "Life," indeed, in the fulness of its capacity, is the comprehensive blessing of the Kingdom. In this connection, the teaching of St. John in the Fourth Gospel about "eternal life" is important. "Eternal Life," in fact, is the Johannine equivalent for the Kingdom of God. The thoughtful reader of the Fourth Gospel is soon impressed by the scant attention given the ever-present phrase of the Synoptic Gospels—"The Kingdom of God," or "The Kingdom of Heaven." Eternal Life seems to be the engrossing theme, and to occupy in the mind of St. John the position which had been held by the Kingdom of God in the thought of the Synoptists. Upon reflection, however, no cause for bewilderment is found. St. John was ever occupied rather with the content and meaning of Christianity, than with the perpetuation of the form in which it was originally given. A little thought reveals that the Kingdom of God and Eternal Life are equivalent: *the one is the other*. The point of view may be different, but the object viewed is the same. The Kingdom of God is eternal or enduring life; eternal life is the Kingdom of God. This is well illustrated in the saying: "He that doeth the will of God abideth forever." Hence, when St. John emphasizes "life" and "eternal life," he does not minimize the Kingdom of God. He rather views the Kingdom in the aspect of its character and end. "Eternal Life" is the subjective aspect of the Kingdom in relation to personality and eternity. Bearing this fact in mind, we notice throughout the Fourth Gospel that St. John speaks of "eternal life" as a *present* possession, and a *present* fact. "He that believeth on me *hath* everlasting life" (St.

Jn. 6:47).<sup>1</sup>

Thus we learn from abundant sources that the Kingdom of God was a present fact.<sup>2</sup> In this respect, indeed, Jesus was in full accord with the popular Jewish expectation, while He dissents from the popular view of to-day as to the exclusively *future* character of the Kingdom. That Jesus, while opposing the Pharisaic view of the materialistic and political Kingdom of God, was not led to the opposite extreme of viewing the Kingdom as entirely future, "transcendental and heavenly," a tendency already marked in the Apocalyptic literature of His time, is only one of the many illustrations of the splendid balance, the superb equipoise of the Man of Nazareth.

The popular query to-day, however, no less than in the day of Our Lord, is this: Admitting that Jesus taught the actual existence of the Kingdom, where is it, and what is it? The Kingdom seems non-existent. Jesus, indeed, seemed in His own day to present a sorry spectacle—A King without a Kingdom.

To understand where it is, let us again recall the fundamental character of the Kingdom. It is inward and spiritual. It is primarily a Kingdom of the inner life. God's Kingdom is where God's will is sovereign. John and Jesus had declared

<sup>1</sup> This, again, suggests also an important truth: the word "eternal" does not relate so much to time as to character. "Eternal life" is not merely a life that is endless; it is rather a life which continues, *because it is the kind of life that deserves to continue, and must continue*. It is a life begun on earth, and possessing the power of survival after death.

<sup>2</sup> Yet other evidence is available. Jesus speaks of the least of His disciples in the Kingdom as then greater than the greatest of the adherents of the Old Dispensation—John the Baptist. The humblest disciple of the Kingdom, He means, "enjoys greater privileges and stands upon a higher plane of revelation" (St. Mt. 11:11). The Sermon on the Mount is, also, descriptive throughout of the righteousness of the subjects of the Kingdom in this world. The virtues there inculcated are evidently to be realized in the ordinary relationships of man with man. Unexpected and incidental testimony corroborative of the present character of the Kingdom is also found. Certain delicate expressions, such as the Greek word *ωμοιώθη*, used in the parable of the Tares, and already referred to, are very suggestive. This word declares, for example, that the Kingdom, even as Jesus was speaking, "had become like" a field containing tares intermingled with the wheat.

repeatedly, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." And it was at hand; it was present; it was a fact. It was at hand, present, and a fact in the Person of Jesus of Nazareth. By Him, indeed, God's will was done on earth as it is done in Heaven. "Not my will be done, but thine, O Lord." The soul, the mind, and the heart of Jesus were the Kingdom of God.<sup>1</sup> In the inner life of Jesus, there was that conscious harmony with God's will, which is akin to the perfect but unconscious harmony which exists in the world of Nature, and throughout the Universe. The Kingdom of God in humanity, indeed, which should have been introduced in, and through, the person of the First Adam, was at last *actual* in, and through, the Person of Jesus of Nazareth, the Second Adam. Further, the Kingdom began to be extended when Jesus collected a band of disciples about Him into whose hearts a new principle of life was introduced—the principle of divine rule. The Second Adam, indeed, was begetting spiritual children to continue the good, as the First Adam had begotten children of the flesh to perpetuate the evil. The one was the founder of a humanity divorced from God; the other founded a humanity wedded to God. The one divided the Kingdom of God; the other united it. In the one and his descendants, indeed, the world for centuries had drifted away from God; in the other and His descendants the world for centuries would advance toward God.

The Kingdom of God had thus with Jesus become primarily a Kingdom of personality. The Kingdom, indeed, had availed itself of the most forceful of all agencies for good—the power of the personal life. Jesus, henceforth, as the actual embodiment of the Kingdom in the Individual, must necessarily exert an ever-increasing influence over the minds and hearts of men. Ideas are comparatively powerless unless clothed with personality. Incarnate in a person, they become sources of undying influence. Well has George Eliot said: "Ideas are often poor ghosts; our sun-filled eyes cannot discern them; they pass athwart us in their vapor, and cannot make themselves felt. But sometimes they are made flesh; they breathe upon us with warm breath; they touch us with soft, responsive hands, they

<sup>1</sup>"The soul is the microcosm within which, in all its strength, the Kingdom of God is set up."

look at us with sad, sincere eyes, and speak to us in appealing tones; they are clothed in a living, human soul, with all its conflicts, its faith and its love. Then their presence is a power, then they shake us like a passion, and we are drawn after them with gentle compulsion, as flame is drawn to flame." This, indeed, was the glory and the power inhering in the present "time" of the Kingdom.

That Jesus desired men to believe the Kingdom present in His own Person may be inferred from His reply to the embassy sent to Him by John the Baptist, from the prison fortress of Machero. John, we remember, had been imprisoned by Herod for his boldness in rebuking the incestuous union between Herod and his brother Philip's wife. The prophet was lying in prison, disheartened and downcast. Doubts began to haunt him. On the banks of the Jordan he had testified unhesitatingly to the Messiahship of the Prophet of Galilee. Things, however, have not shaped themselves as he had expected. Consequently, he sends two of his disciples to Jesus with the question: "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" "Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them." The answer is not direct, but suggestive. John is to draw his own conclusion. As soon, however, as we hear Jesus' reply, our minds instinctively revert to the Inaugural Address delivered in the synagogue of Nazareth, and, at once, we perceive His meaning. Jesus had identified Himself in that address with the Messianic character prophesied about of old. Now He suggests to John that, if he will consider the signs of the times as they are revealed in His Person, and the work which He is doing, there will be no reason to doubt that the long-expected Messiah had come, and with Him, the Kingdom of God. John was laboring to some extent under the perverted Messianic ideas of the day, and Jesus reminds him of Isaiah's picture of the Messianic King and Kingdom, suggesting that it is finding fulfilment before His very eyes, if he will but open them and see.

That Jesus also spoke of the Kingdom as *future* in time, as well as *present*, cannot be reasonably denied. On one occa-



sion, He declared that some of the bystanders would not die until they had seen the Kingdom of God come with power. "And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the Kingdom of God come with power" (St. Mk. 9:1). He also taught that men should come from the East and the West to sit with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom (St. Lu. 13:29). At the Last Supper, He referred to a future repast with the disciples in the Kingdom. The passages are respectively: "And they shall come from the East and from the West; and from the North and from the South, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God." "Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God." We must bear in mind, however, at this point, that the Kingdom of God is present in time before it can be future. The two times of the Kingdom, indeed, bear to each other the relation of cause and effect, of antecedent and result. To interpret the Kingdom only in an eschatological, or final, sense, is in reality to misunderstand the very nature of the Kingdom. For a due appreciation of the essential nature of the Kingdom will reveal that "strictly speaking the future of the Kingdom is divided, and the notes of time are really three-fold,—present, near future, and more distant future."

While present in the world, the Kingdom is always *coming*, paradoxical as it may seem. It is this fact, indeed, which necessitates "the near future" of the Kingdom, and predicts the "more distant future." The Kingdom of God is first within the man. Planted within the individual, it is little more in the beginning than an humble desire to conform to the will of God. Only gradually, and after labor, struggle, and years, does the sovereignty of God gain control of the entire mind, and heart, and life—yet all the while the Kingdom is present and acting like the leaven of the Master's illustration—"a principle working from within outward, for the renewal and transformation" of the individuality, affecting life in all its relationships, even influencing the mental processes, reconstructing the thought. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump, but not at once. When introduced, it affects the parts immediately adjacent, and ultimately the whole. Thus Our Lord's teaching



in regard to the time of the Kingdom, contradictory and inconsistent as it may appear to the superficial, is but the logical development of the principle enunciated in the parable of the Leaven. It is but the parable of the Leaven translated into terms of time. If the Kingdom acts like leaven, there must be both a near future and a more distant future for the Kingdom of God.

And, as it is with the Kingdom in the individual life, so it is in the world at large. The sovereignty of God is social in aspect, as well as individualistic. It is intended to "renew and transform every department of human existence." It seeks a lost society as well as a lost individual. The social organism is, indeed, full of darkness, because it lacks singleness of eye. For example, the subject of Marriage should show an ever closer approximation to the divine ideal because of the leaven of the Kingdom in the world. The true principle of Marriage and Divorce is set forth in St. Mt. 19:3-9. As this principle prevails, we have the near future of the Kingdom, and the token of the more distant future. The Kingdom, also, consecrates social and family life, and seeks for their conformity to the Divine Ideal, as Jesus indicated by His presence, and first miracle which He wrought at the Wedding Feast of Cana in Galilee. The State itself should also reveal, and should reveal increasingly, the near future of the Kingdom.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>"Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are God's." (St. Mt. 21:21). This utterance, indeed, sheds a brilliant light upon the comprehensiveness of the Kingdom. The Pharisees taught that the Jews, as the Chosen People, should be ruled by God alone, or by His immediate Vicegerent. Hence the payment of the annual poll-tax to Rome was exceedingly obnoxious. They consult Jesus as to the legitimacy of the tax, expecting that He, as a loyal Jew, would declare against its lawfulness. Such a reply would make the Emperor His foe, and probably cause His deliverance to the Governor, which the Herodians desired on political grounds, and the Pharisees for religious reasons. Jesus' answer, however, by means of the coin, was confounding. Apparently evasive, it met successfully all aspects of their question. The significance of the reply is this: Political service need not and should not conflict with religious service. The State and the Church, while not identical, are not essentially antagonistic. Both have their sphere, and both should be the Kingdom of God.

The perfect service of God, indeed, involves the rendition of full

It is true that Jesus said almost nothing specifically about the effect of the Kingdom's principles upon what are usually denominated secular affairs. There is no reference in His teaching to the Kingdom's influence upon Art or Education, Literature or Culture, Philosophy or Economics, Politics or Commerce. We must remember, however, that Jesus did not suffer from the prevalent fallacy of dividing life into two compartments, one of which is labeled "sacred" and the other "secular." The Jew, in fact, knew no sacred and no secular: all was *sacred*. Life was religious in its every phase. In Jesus' thought, then, the Kingdom was to dominate life in its entirety. He simply emphasized the fundamental principles of the Kingdom, and trusted to their inherent power to permeate and impregnate the whole, regenerating all things.

The Christian centuries, indeed, have witnessed ever more and more the gradual harmonization of almost every department of human activity with the will of God. The Kingdom, religious in essence, has always and everywhere overstepped the bounds of what men call the "religious," and has invaded the so-called "secular" sphere, seeking to reclaim it for God. The aim has not been to make the world and life "religious" in the common and emasculated sense of the word, but to have the principles of God reign everywhere. The former has indeed been the result whenever the identification of the King-

service to the State. The Pharisees sought to serve God religiously; the Herodian was content to serve Him politically. Each thought their whole duty fulfilled, whereas, each had failed in half their duty. The coin evidenced the authoritative government of Rome: under it, and because of it, the Pharisees enjoyed whatever blessings they had, hence they owed certain duties to it. "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's." The Herodians, however, while rendering unto Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's, had forgotten God who alone rendered Cæsar's government stable and authoritative. The duty to the State, and the duty to God, were, however, complementary and not antagonistic; equally incumbent upon all men, and both are necessary to the perfection of either. Men are ever forgetful, however, that the Moral Law was written upon *Two* Tables of Stone: the one, dealing with man's duty to God; the other, with his duty to his fellow-man. The Church, unfortunately, like the Pharisees of old, has always been chiefly concerned with duty to God, and neglectful of the equally important duty to man. In consequence, thousands to-day are more concerned with the service of man than with the service to God.

dom with the visible Church has prevailed. Then the attempt is made to subordinate every department of life to the Church. The State must bow before the Church; thrones and nations acknowledge the sovereignty of the Mistress of the World. Science must be the hand-maid of theology. Everywhere there is curtailing, restricting, dwarfing. Life is limited instead of had more abundantly. Consequently, there is constant rebellion and struggle. A false ideal controls many, but is utterly unable to conquer completely human nature, and human instinct. Where it is successful, we have a society, sexless, impotent, miserable.

On the other hand, the veritable Kingdom of God seeks not to be Master but servant, although it becomes sovereign through service. It seeks to assist the State; to enrich life by developing it, by calling out every inherent power in accordance with the highest principles of its own existence. The effort everywhere is to free, not to enslave. The one factor, indeed, works from within to enlarge; the other from without, to suppress. The one is instinct with youth and vigor; the other bears the marks of decrepitude and death. The one lives in the past; the other always hails the future.

What a depth of meaning there is in the oft-used words of the Lord's Prayer: "*Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven,*" now becomes apparent. The coming of the sovereignty of God, indeed, means infinitely more than the extension of the Christian Church or the transition from a terrestrial to a celestial sphere; it means the bringing of man's manifold relationships and activities under the control of God.

Thus we find that Jesus' idea of the coming of the Kingdom is immeasurably larger and more inspiring than is generally admitted. He would, indeed, transfigure the whole of life.

Usually, this coming of the Kingdom is very slow. At other times, the long-continued, silent, and unobserved leavening process precipitates a sudden and apparently unheralded advance. Such an advance, the last century witnessed in the freeing of the American slaves, and the emancipation of the Russian serfs; more recently in the revolutions which are bringing political liberty to the Latin races and even to Asiatic

peoples.

This "near future" of the Kingdom, as we have interpreted it, is referred to by Our Lord in St. Mark 9: 1: "Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God *come with power.*" In fact, many of the passages which are usually interpreted as referring to the Final Coming of the Kingdom, really refer to its spiritual and continuous coming. The writer is persuaded that such passages as St. Mt. 10: 23, St. Mt. 16: 27-28, St. Lu. 17: 22-36, St. Mt. 24: 29-51, St. Mt. 26: 63-64, and their counterparts in the other Gospels, bear this significance. Unfortunately the limits of this work do not permit proof of the fact. However, let us now remember that, in Jesus' view, the Kingdom was to be ushered to advancing stages by marked steps, which could be compared to the coming of the Son of Man in majesty (St. Mt. 16: 28), or to the Kingdom of God coming with power. These "comings," however, are always regarded as imperfect and incomplete. The thought implied is "that the Kingdom is not fully come till everything in human life and in the relations of man in society is brought into complete harmony with the will of God." A full and complete coming of the Kingdom is therefore posited.

The Kingdom of God, indeed, will not be a mere continuous evolution. Having had a beginning, and having a present development, it will have a consummation: the *more remote future of the Kingdom*. Christianity is, in this respect, closely allied to all the great religions of the world, and to the great philosophic and scientific systems of human thought. All have some doctrine of an end. Of course, in using the word "end," we do not mean an absolute end or termination of all things—but the entrance upon the celestial stage, when the end of things as they are constituted at present shall be at hand. The human mind, the constitution of the physical earth, the very nature of the Universe itself, no less than past history, and all human experience, demand and predicate an *end*. Hence Christianity has its teleological aspect.

Our study would lead us to expect this. The language of the parable which illustrates the development of the Kingdom by the growth of a seed is significant: "first the blade, then

the ear, *then the full corn in the ear.*" Here, indeed, are "the times" of the Kingdom—present, near future, remote future. The remote future of the Kingdom is also distinctly emphasized in the words: "But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come" (St. Mk. 4: 29). The luxuriant growth of the Mustard seed, and the thoroughness of the leaven in its work, may be said, also, without unduly emphasizing the details of a parable, to predicate the consummation of the Kingdom. The parables of the Tares and the Drag-Net clearly demonstrate the same truth, and may contribute certain features of the event. The most convincing proof of the final coming of the Kingdom, however, is to be derived from the entire trend of Jesus' teaching in regard to the Kingdom of God. As the Old Testament demanded the New Testament as its complement and apology, so the Kingdom of God, as revealed by Jesus, demanded through its present character, a more complete and glorious final manifestation. Without this, the Kingdom is unintelligible and a mockery. It is especially noticeable, also, that the Fourth Gospel, which is the most insistent of all the Gospels upon the spiritual and progressive coming of the Kingdom, is not without unreserved testimony to a final consummation of the Kingdom, and an adjudication of all things.

Our data for determining the details of this "coming," however, are few and unsatisfactory. This "time" of the Kingdom will mark the transference of the stage of action from earth to heaven, yet the character of this stage is entirely beyond our ken. Men endeavor to ascertain the conditions of this era, only to fail. Their attempts are sometimes interesting, often inane, and not infrequently ludicrous. Here, where certainty is less justifiable than elsewhere, we often find a dogmatism at once irreverent and unseemly. Time is projected into eternity. The after-world is constructed upon the basis of the present world. Heaven is a much magnified earth. Golden streets, pearly gates, and a catholicity of musical ability are integral factors of the conception. Of course this is pardonable, if it remains in the realm of the figurative and the approximate. When accepted literally, it becomes puerile and utterly inadequate.

On the very threshold of our speculation, indeed, Jesus con-



fronts us with an indication of its absolute futility. Let us note the incident. The Sadducees denied the resurrection of the dead. Laughing at what they termed Pharisaic credulity, they came to Jesus with an inquiry, framed to show the absurdity of the Pharisaic belief. The Mosaic law required that, when a married man died without leaving children, his brother should marry his widow and raise up children to him. The case propounded to Jesus was this: A woman had been married to seven brothers in obedience to the Mosaic requirement; to whom would she belong in the resurrection of the dead? The supposition of the Sadducees was the prevalent supposition of to-day, that virtually the same conditions must prevail in heaven that prevail on earth. The reply of Jesus is very important. He declares that His questioners do not understand the Scriptures, which they profess to believe, for they unmistakably imply immortality, neither do they know *the power of God*. "Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God? For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven" (St. Mk. 12: 18-27).

This language is explicit. In the future of the Kingdom of God there is no marriage. Now the married state is fundamental in this world. We cannot conceive of a worthy state or condition of humanity in which husband and wife, parents and children, and homes are not essential factors. Jesus, however, with very few words, informs us that in the final stage of the Kingdom this condition will not exist, and cites the power of God as the indication of the Divine ability to fashion another environment for man, which will illustrate another principle of social life entirely. If, then, the final stage of the Kingdom will not be organized on this fundamental principle of our present existence, is it not foolhardy to attempt to conceive of other characteristics of the future Kingdom? "We now see through a glass darkly, but then we shall see face to face." We must admit that we do not, and that we cannot know the conditions which will prevail, because we do not know the power or the resources of God. The words of St. Paul express our ignorance and our knowledge alike: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love



him" (I. Cor. 2:9). Thus, while ignorant of the details, we have every reason to believe in the final coming of the Kingdom after a long period of time, when Jesus who "being the Holiest among the mighty, and the mightiest among the holy, has lifted with His pierced hand empires off their hinges, has turned the stream of centuries out of its channel, and still governs the ages," shall return as "the glorious Leader and King of Mankind, the triumphant Founder and Perfecter of the Kingdom of a redeemed humanity." The dead will rise, and the day for Judgment be at hand. This, indeed, is clearly pointed out by the Synoptists, and by St. John. The Synoptists, however, dwell rather upon the final Resurrection, while St. John, who by no means ignores this event, dwells upon the resurrection as a moral and ethical fact, possible in this life, the prelude to, and the cause of the final Resurrection to Eternal Life. "And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (St. Jn. 5:29).

We are thus limited to the baldest and barest of facts. We may enter the realm of fantastic speculation, indulging in either the wildest or the most sober of theories, and exercising to the Heart's content the most fascinating arts of rhetoric, yet all is profitless. This, indeed, men love to do, rather than to adhere to the substantial facts which are revealed, translating them into terms of their life. The important thing, however, to remember is, that the present and the future of the Kingdom are related to each other as cause and effect. There is "first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." Hence those who would ultimately *enter* the Kingdom must pass through these successive stages. There must be this orderly progress. The individual must have the Kingdom present in his life, before he can be present in the future of the Kingdom in any satisfactory sense. This, indeed, is sufficient for mankind to know. Jesus simply brought life and immortality to light; the details of the eternal life are, and will remain, obscure.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE CHURCH AND THE KINGDOM

THE world to-day hears a great deal of what the church has to say about Jesus. Equally important, however—if not more important, in view of present conditions—is it for the world to hear what Jesus has to say about the church.

Only on two distinct occasions, however, did Our Lord make explicit mention of His church. The references are St. Matthew 16:18 and 18:17. Some scholars, notably Wendt, dispute the authenticity of these sayings of Jesus, inasmuch as there are only two references to the church in Our Lord's entire teachings, as we have them recorded in the Gospels, and both of these are found only in St. Matthew. While this paucity of reference is remarkable, yet the utterances in question are so eminently characteristic of the Christ, and so natural, logical and essential in view of the circumstances which called them into being, that we are compelled to disagree with that criticism which would invalidate them, and to acknowledge them genuine and worthy of most studious interpretation.

Before proceeding to their detailed interpretation, however, it may be pertinent to ask: What idea does the word "church" convey to us? A little reflection will reveal that the word is used commonly in one of three senses: the universal, the denominational, or the local. We speak, for instance, of the "universal church," meaning the Christian Church throughout the world, independent of any particular nationality, age, or clime. Again, we speak of the Episcopal, the Methodist, or the Presbyterian church, narrowing the term to apply to some specific body of Christians or denomination. Yet again, we speak of the church in some locality or town, thus more completely limiting the application of the word. Underneath this diversified usage, however, there is, in the popular mind, a substantial unity of conception or idea. It is the idea of *organization*. Using the word "church," we understand it as signifying an

organized, duly constituted body, with its own officers, institutions, laws, and clearly defined beliefs. The character or kind of organization doubtless depends upon the point of view of the person using the term; upon the ecclesiastical spectacles worn by the speaker, and through which he views the distant past. The Roman Catholic, the Episcopalian, the Presbyterian, the Methodist, and the Congregationalist alike are apt to project into the earliest use of the word "church" the character or type of ecclesiastical organization with which they are most familiar, and of which they are devotees to-day. Hence even the authority of Jesus is sometimes claimed for each of these varying forms of organization. This method of procedure is, of course, unworthy of rational support. It is also a more or less flagrant reversal of history. The law of organization is much the same as the law of life. Institutions grow; they are evolved and developed. They are not born full-grown, mature in form and character. To attribute either the broad outlines or the detailed minutiae of ecclesiastical organization to Jesus is, in our opinion at least, to belittle the wisdom of the Son of Man in view of the universality of His religion, and to demand His descent to a particularity with which He was apparently but slightly concerned, if concerned at all. Jesus, indeed, stands committed to no ecclesiastical program. The popular interpretation of the word "church," however, renders it imperative that we study the meaning of the word used and so translated in the pages of the New Testament. The term is the Greek *ἐκκλησία*, whence are derived "ecclesiastic" and "ecclesiastical."<sup>1</sup>

At the outset we are compelled to say that the meaning of this word is not what is first suggested by the English word "church." The word of the Evangelist meant not so much organization, official and stereotyped, as an assemblage, a congregation, a community or brotherhood. This is the fundamental idea when we study the historic Hebrew connotation of the term. The thought is plastic, pliable, more social than institutional; it is an ideal to be made real, rather than an actual to be made ideal. Primarily, the term speaks of social and religious union. At first everything is in a more or less chaotic or disordered state—at least, an unorganized state. The reference of "*ecclesia*," indeed, is to the time before there have arisen

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix F, "The Meaning of Ecclesia."

the inevitable results of any permanent association of men—duly constituted laws, officials, creeds, a thoroughly organized system; or, in other words, an institutional régime. This will and must ensue. But we must be careful not to confound the later growth with the incipient stage; we must not project the late into the early. In our views of the Church of Jesus, let us abandon the mechanical for the vital.<sup>1</sup>

In order that we may see this as the meaning of Jesus the more clearly, let us turn to the recorded instances of Our Lord's use of the equivalent of this word. Toward the close of His life, and, therefore, late in His public ministry, Jesus and the Apostles were at Cesarea-Philippi. The scene and occasion are memorable. Already the bitter hostility of the Jews against Jesus, and their absolute rejection of Him are in evidence. Furthermore, they are standing in the very presence of the august symbol of the Roman power in the splendid temple at Cesarea. Jesus asks of His disciples: "Who do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" The apostles answer: "Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some Elijah, and others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." This reply reveals but one opinion—the people do not understand Him to be the Messiah. Conscious of this, Jesus addresses to them a like inquiry: "But who say ye that I am?" That moment was one of dramatic intensity. For long He has sought to lead them to the truth. Have His efforts failed? Now is the moment to see. Think of the suspense! But the Master has not long to wait. Peter, the impetuous

<sup>1</sup> The succinct yet pregnant statement of Dr. Hort is worthy of our attention: "The word 'Church' carries with it associations derived from the institutions and doctrines of later times, and this cannot, at present, without a constant mental effort, be made to convey the full and exact force which originally belonged to 'ecclesia.'"

Further, it is interesting to notice that in the early English translations of the New Testament "ecclesia" was translated "congregation" and not "church." For instance, in the famous Bishop's Bible, St. Matt. 16:18 reads, not "Upon this rock I will build my church," but "Upon this rock I will build my congregation." It is only with the appearance of our Authorized Version in 1611 that the translation "church" wholly supplanted the more correct rendering of "ecclesia." Such facts as these bring forcibly before us the thought and idea of Jesus. He was to have a congregation, an assembly, a community, or brotherhood of men. This was the great conception.

and active leader and spokesman of the apostolic band, immediately replies: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus has not failed. Success is His. Here is one at least who understands. Rome may shine in her splendor, the Jewish nation spurn the Galilean peasant, the people think of Him only as a prophet; but Peter, at least, is convinced that He is the Messiah and none else.<sup>1</sup>

And now is the moment to declare the effect or consequence of this voluntary confession. "I say unto thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my '*ecclesia*,' and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." There was, in other words, to be a new Israel, in which Peter should be first; a community or brotherhood of men, with Peter as the cornerstone, against which the very gates of hell, the emblem of invincibility to the Ancient World, should not prevail.<sup>2</sup>

This is the first explicit intimation which we have of the Church. The words break suddenly from the Master's lips. They seem, however, to presage a line of thought long entertained, and to voice an intention determined upon in silence, but now, at the opportune moment, publicly proclaimed. The "*ecclesia*" indeed, was no new idea, no sudden fancy, but rather a mature conviction. The Christian Church, in fact, is no mere mechanical creation; it is a vital thing. The church is necessitated by the very nature of Christianity. Had Jesus entertained no thought of founding a church, and had He taken no steps to found one, the church would have resulted necessarily, Christianity being what it is in both life and truth. Truth tends to association and organization; life, to expression and embodiment.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is an assured conviction, too—calm, mature; so mature as to be able to bear the strain of the Messiah's suffering and death—an idea abhorrent to the Jewish mind, but advocated openly by Jesus for the first time on this occasion. Of their own will have they come to their conclusion; there has been no coercion, no persuasion. Heaven has opened their eyes, and they have seen.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix G., "The Primacy of Peter."

<sup>3</sup> This is natural law. The psychologist's maxim, "All mental states are followed by activity of some sort," finds illustration here. The church, then, would have resulted had Jesus taken no active steps consciously to utilize this law. But Jesus, here as elsewhere, puts Himself into line, if we may so speak, with the laws of



Any great idea indeed, or thought born into the world of men attracts to itself kindred spirits, and usually becomes an organizing force. History is replete with such movements. It is inevitable, therefore, apart from any direct action of the Master, that such great ideas as those of Jesus of Nazareth should become an organizing principle in the life of the world. How naturally too would this be brought about when the fundamental thoughts of Our Lord were the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. That this truth was present to the master-intellect of Jesus we fully believe, and to it we attribute that characteristic optimism which impelled Him to form only the nucleus of a society in the persons of the Twelve; and, to quote the words of England's foremost New Testament scholar, Dr. Sanday, "After the manner of the divine operations in nature, he was rather content to plant a germ with indefinite capacities of growth, than thought it necessary to fix in advance the details of organization." <sup>1</sup>

nature, and consciously cooperates with them, or, better, makes them serve His ends.

<sup>1</sup> Exhaustive study of the life of Jesus has revealed the falsity of the claim that He established a form of ecclesiastical government, and Historical Criticism and Research are ever revealing more fully that the form or forms which subsequently arose were a gradual growth, and in their origin and development shaped by actual needs and largely borrowed from forms of Organization already current in both the Jewish and the Gentile worlds until, in the process of time, the whole approximated closely to the Imperial form of Organization with the Pope or Cæsar at its head. Well-nigh every form of ecclesiastical organization with which the modern world is familiar had its counterpart in some stage of this development, uniformity being not an initial but a culminating characteristic. The much-vaunted "Historic Episcopate" represents only a "half-way house," a half-way stage in the development, and is found in the beginning only *in some places*. Hence, while it may prove of service in the organic reunion of the Christian Church (if such unity is desirable, and we think the matter open to grave question, since greater evils are likely to ensue from such unity than those which now prevail from the divisions of Christendom, for the memories of the World of one Church are certainly neither pleasant, inspiring nor alluring), it is at once deprived of all authority as coming from a command of Christ or as representing a "development" under the direction of the Holy Spirit since, as we have just said, that early development issued both logically and actually in the Papacy. The truth is that neither the intermediate stages nor the



Jesus, indeed, at Cesarea-Philippi had a vision, superb and glorious, of a great nation or brotherhood of men, a family of God in which the all-important thing should be the sovereignty of the law of love.

That He had been consistently working toward this end, however, from the beginning is evident. The organizing power of His idea, in fact, began to manifest itself when the first two disciples—Andrew and John—believed on Him by the Jordan and, turning from the Baptist, followed Him. A little later, Jesus manifested this social power of His ideal when, by the Sea of Galilee, He summoned four fishermen to leave all and follow Him. (St. Mt. 4:18-22; St. Mk. 1:16-19; cf. St. Lu. 5:7-11). Here, and also in the call of Levi (St. Mt. 9:9; St. Mk. 2:14; St. Lu. 5:27-29), a significant step was taken in the formation of the brotherhood of men. A more distinctive and far more significant step was soon taken in the call of the Twelve Apostles.<sup>1</sup>

The selection of the Twelve indeed occurred at a critical moment. Rejected by the authorities, and largely by the people of Judea, Jesus had sought the less conventional atmosphere of Galilee. There, however, the inveterate enmity of His foes pursued Him. The Pharisees, with the Herodians, had organized for His overthrow; the answer of Jesus was the call of the Twelve. His enemies have advanced a step; He too will advance a step. As they seek the ruin of His cause, He seeks to insure its success. "Yes, him they may destroy, but in his room there shall be Twelve; and from the Twelve how many more!"

final form of this early development are essentially permanent or binding; they are simply accidents of Christianity's development, and the super-abounding life of Christianity may at any time develop new or better forms; the new wine may demand new bottles or new channels of expression.

<sup>1</sup> St. Lu. 6:12-13 says: "And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples, and of them he chose twelve, whom, also, he named Apostles" (cf. St. Mt. 10; St. Lu. 3:14-19). Nowhere, however, were their duties formally defined; they simply occupied an intimate personal relationship with Jesus, as companions and ambassadors. We use the word "ambassador" advisedly. The Apostle is not merely one who is sent with a message, but one who is also a personal and an accredited representative.

There had been Twelve Tribes in God's Ancient Kingdom of Israel; these had constituted the ancient *kahal*, or congregation. So Jesus now selected Twelve Apostles. As from the twelve sons of Jacob, the nation had descended which was at once the embodiment of the Kingdom, and its agency of extension, so from these Twelve spiritual Sons of Jesus, was to descend the nation or brotherhood which should be the fuller expression of the Kingdom, and its means for perfect consummation. "And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, and to have power to heal sickness, and to cast out devils" (St. Mk. 3:14, 15).<sup>1</sup>

Turning now to the second and last mention of the church

<sup>1</sup> In the light of this call, we appreciate an utterance of Jesus recorded by St. Matthew and St. Luke, although in a different context. At the Last Supper, the Master is represented by St. Luke as saying: "And I appoint unto you a kingdom as my Father hath appointed unto me: That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the Twelve Tribes of Israel" (22:29, 30). St. Matthew 19:28 quotes this passage after the interview with the rich young man, and St. Peter's question as to what the disciples were to have for following Jesus. There twelve thrones are mentioned; while in St. Luke we have simply "thrones," owing to the defection of Judas. The Apostles' position, however, would be a temporary one. (I. Cor. 15:28.) The meaning of the Master is this: In view of the Apostles' labors, and the perils through which they had remained constant, Jesus ordained for them a sovereignty, as the Father had ordained dominion for Him. They were selected for unique distinction: to sit at the *very table of the Sovereign* of the Kingdom in the Messianic Banqueting Hall, and to occupy thrones as judges of the Twelve Tribes of Israel—the Ancient Israel perhaps, and the new Spiritual Israel of which they would be the progenitors. Recruited from the middle class of Jewish society, the Apostles certainly did not seem destined for such regal honors. They possessed, however, moral fitness and spiritual aptitude. Hence, Jesus kept them with himself for some six months, instructing them in the bonds of closest intimacy, and subsequently sending them two by two upon a mission to the lost sheep of Israel, that He might reclaim Israel if possible, and at the same time test the strength and adaptability of His ambassadors. Thus, while proclaiming the truths of the Kingdom everywhere, Jesus was especially busy with the *training* of the Twelve, whom He regarded as the first-fruits of the brotherhood which He was hopeful of establishing, and the reapers in a rich harvest which was to be garnered. Realizing this, we can understand the great significance of St. Peter's confession at Cesarea Philippi.

in the Gospels (St. Mt. 18:17ff.), we see the aspect of brotherhood more clearly revealed. This utterance presupposes the earlier utterance. Christianity is nothing if it is not practical. When a wrong is committed against us by a Christian brother or sister, Jesus tells us that offended dignity must yield to ardent desire for reconciliation. The spiritual condition of the offender must prompt us to the rescue. "Go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." Seek a private interview and understanding. "If he will hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother;" yes, gained him anew for the brotherhood of man. "But if he will not hear thee, take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established." Following the Old Testament precedent of witnesses, the principle of arbitration is to be utilized. Arbitrators, disinterested, whose eyes are not blinded by passion or self-interest, who can bring moral influence to bear in effecting a settlement, and who can testify to what has occurred, must be sought. But should the offender remain obdurate, as the last resort, "tell it unto the church," the ἐκκλησία, the last court of appeal. It is contended by some—we think unjustifiably—that ἐκκλησία here is the Jewish ἐκκλησία, but surely, if this be true, the principle involved is no less applicable to the Christian ἐκκλησία or community of believers in Jesus. Should the brother not hearken to the advice and exhortation of the church, "let him be for thee"—i. e., in thy estimation—"as a heathen and a publican." In other words he is self-excommunicated. There is to be, and there can be, no brotherly intercourse with him, for he will not act the part of a brother. The church is also informed that its decisions will be ratified in heaven. And to render the exercise of this tremendous power credible and reasonable, Jesus promises to the supplicating church—pleading for the renewal of brotherhood—divine illumination, so that the decisions of the congregation may accord with the mind of God. The ideas of the ἐκκλησία are here most clearly brought out by the Master; they are fellowship with God and the brotherhood of man. The sin against the church is the sin against love—love for the brethren.

If the method of Christ was followed consistently and scrupulously, what a vast step toward the peace of the world would be taken! Exercised in Christian parishes and congregations,

and everywhere among Christian people, it might offend some; and others might snap their fingers in the face of all attempts at reconciliation, seeking refuge in some other parish, or denomination, to be welcomed by some ignoble, perhaps rejoicing, clergyman or minister. Thus the effort would often be rendered abortive. But should all religious bodies, parishes, and congregations rise to the height of the Master's teaching, such unseemly conduct would be impossible, and general Christian sentiment would compel to godly union and concord. Might not the so-called Church of Jesus stress this teaching of the Master, with profit both to itself and to the world, instead of much of the stuff upon which to-day it places heavy emphasis?

That this is the ideal of Jesus, no one can doubt; but, alas! it is far from realization. The church of Jesus Christ is to-day weakest in that which should be its most salient characteristic—heartfelt, unadulterated brotherhood. Of theoretical brotherhood, perhaps of latent brotherhood, we have enough; but of actual, energizing brotherhood we have far too little. Within the church itself class and social distinctions—wealth, culture, education, and intelligence, and many other things—enter to mar the sense of brotherhood. Consequently innumerable individuals and the masses drift away from the church.<sup>1</sup>

The spirit of brotherhood, however, is an essential of the church of Jesus. Orthodoxy of creed and orthodoxy of ministry are well, but orthodoxy of spirit is better. In interpreting *ἐκκλησία* primarily of ministry or creed we commit an egregious blunder. This splendid word of the Gospel turns the thought

<sup>1</sup> The severest indictment ever received by the Christian church is the existence and the immense popularity of the many fraternal organizations. Conviviality and selfishness are neither the source nor the mainstay of these; indeed, their presence is a mighty protest against existing conditions, the eloquent witness of the innate craving of the human heart for brotherhood, the confession that it cannot be found in the church of Jesus Christ, and the abundant indication that men have set out to find it for themselves. Did the church of Jesus even measurably attain its ideal, their *raison d'être* would cease to exist. And, sad to relate, one of the chief forces militating against the sense of brotherhood arises from the church's failure to appreciate the essential meaning of *ἐκκλησία*. Essential means something that is necessary to the constitution or existence of a thing.

away from the institutional and speaks of the social, the moral, the ethical; of a brotherhood, not primarily of an organization. He who best fulfils the terms of human brotherhood belongs to the true church of Christ. "He that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven; the same is my mother and sister and brother." To do the will is to belong to the family of God: the church is the family of God.

That Jesus intended His brotherhood to become, if possible, coextensive with humanity, is seen in the words addressed to the Apostles upon the mountain in Galilee: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (St. Mt. 28:19-20). Again we meet with a dream of universal empire. The vision of a Kingdom gained along Satanic lines, however, is here replaced by a vision of a Kingdom gained along God-appointed lines. "*Go*" bespeaks aggression. Beginning from Jerusalem, they were to *go* unto the ends of the earth, wooing and winning humanity. That which they possessed could overcome all social, national and racial barriers. And going, they were to *disciple* all nations. Man's ideas were to give way before God's ideas. Further, they were to baptize the nations of the earth *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*. The sense of this formula is primarily that of a declaration of allegiance.

Among the Hebrews, as we have found, the name expressed the character or nature of the person named. For example, "the name of Jehovah is used as a succinct expression for the revealed character of God, for all that is known of him." Again, to have the name called over something, involved *the idea of ownership and protection*. It did not mean "that the person or object referred to will bear the name of that person whose name is called over it"; it means that *it will come under his authority, pass into his possession*.<sup>1</sup>

Hence Jesus' expression here bears the Old Testament sig-

<sup>1</sup> II Sam. 12:28 may be cited in illustration of this. Joab is anxious for David to take the city, "lest I take the city, and it be called after my name," i. e., be regarded as having passed under Joab's authority.



nificance, and should be interpreted in that sense. Thus to baptize the nations into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost means to bring them into direct allegiance to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, *and to all for which those names stand*. The nations, in other words, pass under the sovereignty of these personalities. When we realize, even measurably, what these *names* represent, we begin, in some degree, to fathom the depth of Jesus' intention here. He sees with prophetic vision the nations of the earth acknowledging the sovereignty of the Triune God—*become the Kingdom of God*—and representing in every phase of their activity the principles for which Father, Son, and Holy Ghost live. There is an *intensive* power in this formula, as great as the *extensive* power involved in the word "*Go*." The visible church, however, has always been fonder of emphasizing the *extensive* property of the Kingdom, than its *intensive* property. It loves always to follow the line of least resistance.<sup>1</sup> Yet these two properties of the Kingdom should go hand in hand. It is useless, indeed, for the church to "go," unless in going, there is a genuine baptism into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, instead of into a veneer of ecclesiasticism, which often makes the baptized, like the Pharisaic proselyte of old, twofold more the child of Hell than he was before. What men call *Holy* Baptism to-day is, indeed, often worse than nothing. The Trinity, into which Jesus would have humanity baptized, was not outward and metaphysical, but ethical and inward. He dwelt upon its manward, not its Godward aspects. This was the important aspect for the world. His mind was not troubled with the relationship of the Three Persons to the One God, or to one another, but with the relationship of the Three Persons, and each Person to every individual, and to the life of the world. Baptism was not so much into water or into a mere name, as into a new life of aspiration and of power, of forgiveness and of peace.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The writer has known, for instance, of a Diocese of the Protestant Episcopal Church, which was famous for its foreign missionary interest and contributions, yet which *in itself* represented the very acme of Pharisaic exclusivism, social arrogance and *hauteur*.

<sup>2</sup> As a matter of fact, in the New Testament, there is no mention of any one being baptized in the name of the Trinity. The



Thirdly, the Apostles were to teach all nations to observe the commandments of Christ. *Going, discipling, instructing*, was the threefold obligation imposed upon them. They were to be primarily preachers and teachers. Jesus sounded no note of officialdom or of organization whatever.<sup>1</sup> Whatever the Apostles did in the way of organization was due solely to the exigencies of the situations that confronted them, and to the vantage which their peculiar relationship to the Master gave them.

Complying with the obligation imposed, Jesus promises that He will be with them alway, even unto the end of the world. "*Always*" really means "*all the days*." "Days of strength and of weakness, days of success and of failure, of joy and of sorrow, of youth and of age, days of life and days of death—all the days." Obeying His command, indeed, they were to feel the divine benediction of His presence. No product of the ecclesiastical imagination is more illy conceived and unsupported by fact than that which regards this promise as made to a

expressions used are: "in the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 2:38); "in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts. 8:16; 19:5); "in the name of the Lord" (Acts 10:48), cf. Jam. 2:7; Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27; I. Cor. 1:12; 6:11). Several explanations of this usage are offered. (1) Baptism in the name of one Person of the Trinity is really in the name of the Trinity. (2) When "in the name of Jesus" or kindred expressions are used, it is not necessary to understand them as formulas, but simply as an indication that the persons were baptized into allegiance to Jesus, hence the Trinitarian formula may have been used. (3) The shorter and simpler form was the earlier and the original. The Trinitarian formula represents a later development. The latter, in fact, is not met with after St. Mt. 28:19 until it is found in the writings of Justin Martyr (Apol. 1:61), and in these it is not identical with the Gospel formula. (4) In the age of the Apostles there was no fixed formula.

It is quite possible that Christ did not emphasize a formula at all. Ideas with him were more valuable than words. The Apostles, perhaps, saw this, hence their freedom in using other terms. Jesus probably uttered the words of this Trinitarian formula, as He did those of the Lord's prayer: as a model and a standard; to suggest, not to stereotype. By adhesion to the letter, the spirit of both prayer and formula have been largely lost. Yet the form is only valuable as a conservator of the idea. Eternal vigilance, however, is the price of freedom from the curse of formalism.

<sup>1</sup> St. Paul even seems to place but slight emphasis upon the duty of an Apostle to baptize.

specific ecclesiastical régime, orthodox in faith, and regular in ministry. This seems to be the idea often met with among Anglicans, Episcopalians, and Roman and Greek Catholics; among those who boast of being *Historic* churches and of possessing *Historic* Ministries. "*Historicity*" may be a very good thing, but certainly it is worthless in this respect. This theory, in fact, attains the acme of materialism. The promise of Jesus is not thus restricted, nor is it absolute. The principle enunciated is universal and eternal, and conditional. The condition of Christ's presence is compliance with His command. Those who *go, truly baptize, and teach* mankind—be they priest or minister, layman or clergyman, man or woman, Catholic or Protestant—are assured of the constant presence of their Lord. The only sane Apostolic Succession, indeed, is along the line of altruistic endeavor. To interpret it otherwise is blind egotism, and little short of blasphemy. Most Apostolic is he who most Apostolic does. The ample evidence for this truth is the patent divine blessing which has rested, and now rests upon the Apostolic labors of the Denominational Churches, and the non-Episcopal Ministries. The Apostolic Succession of Jesus, indeed, includes Mackaye of Uganda, the Baptist Judson, and the Presbyterian Chalmers, no less than the proud occupants of an "*Historic* Episcopate," and it includes the latter *only* as they "*go, truly baptize, and truly teach.*"

In order that this brotherhood might have permanent expression, a permanent bond of union, and also a means of fellowship with Himself, Jesus instituted "The Lord's Supper." On the eve of the Crucifixion, when reclining at the evening meal, in the quiet of the upper chamber in Jerusalem, Jesus enacted the supreme parable of His life. Here His parabolic genius attains its highest manifestation. Following the example of the Hebrew prophets, who frequently illustrated and rendered impressive some salient truth by means of dramatic actions, the Lord "took the two simplest and most universal representations of sustaining food, bread that strengtheneth man's heart, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and employed them as the universal representatives of spiritual food, of His body broken, and His blood poured out." His action is precisely what we would expect from our knowledge of Him, and of His idea. What could be more fitting than that He embody

the salient purpose and idea for which He stood in some signal act as a permanent memorial of His aim, now that He was going away? What more typical of His peculiar genius? According to St. Mark's account, "As they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God" (St. Mk. 14:22-25).<sup>1</sup>

Whatever else this action of Jesus involved, it involved at least the idea of union and of brotherhood. It is well said that "food has ever been the token of unity—the bond of equal intercourse." "Refusal to take food together is the symbol of exclusiveness and caste distinction." The Jew could not eat with the Gentile, we know, yet Jesus makes a common meal the permanent symbol of the union of His followers without regard to sex, condition or race.<sup>2</sup> This fact is tremendously significant: the very presupposition of the Lord's Supper, indeed, is the sense of brotherhood. Yet to-day the rite so redolent of brotherhood is the symbol largely of division and of strife. The requirement of brotherhood, in fact, is often ignored for some

<sup>1</sup> Four accounts of the institution of the Lord's Supper are found in the New Testament: St. Mt. 26:26-29; St. Mk. 14:22-25; St. Luke 22:17-20; I. Cor. 11:24ff. The accounts in St. Matthew and St. Mark are virtually the same; while those of St. Luke and St. Paul present minor differences. It is singular that neither St. Matthew nor St. Mark record the words: "*Do this in remembrance of me,*" which are recorded by St. Luke and by St. Paul. The earliest account, however, is that given in I. Cor. 11:24, which represents these words as spoken by Jesus. However this may be, it is certain that the occasion and the significance of the Lord's action at the Last Supper would more and more commend itself to the growing insight of the Apostles, as worthy of a permanent memorial. This will appear as we proceed.

It is probable that the "blessing" given by Christ was akin to those used at their meals by the Jews. Thus at the present day the following blessing is said over the bread: "Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who bringest forth bread from the earth," and before drinking wine: "Blessed art thou . . . who createst the fruit of the vine."

<sup>2</sup> "Drink ye *all*." "They *all* drank."

requirement of a fancied faith.

This thought, however, does not exhaust the significance of the rite. While there is a strict unity of conception underlying the act of Jesus, many subordinate and diverse elements are included. About a year before the institution of the Lord's Supper, Jesus had engaged in a very remarkable conversation with the Jews at Capernaum, which cost Him the allegiance of several of His disciples.<sup>1</sup> The meaning of His enigmatical language on this occasion, if hidden from the Jews, was at least patent to spiritual insight. The idea was that Jesus was the life of

<sup>1</sup> "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from Heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from Heaven. . . . Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." The Jews did not understand; they "murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven." Jesus, however, undismayed, asserted with greater positiveness, "I am that bread of life; your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." The antagonism of the Jews became more pronounced: "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Jesus, however, replied, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live forever." In consequence of this teaching, "many of his disciples went back, and walketh no more with him." Jesus, however, retracted nothing; He only added the significant remark: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (St. John 6:32 ff). St. Peter and the Twelve, however, even if they did not understand, remained faithful; the former, indeed, seized the opportunity to attest again his faith in Jesus as the Messiah: "Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."

the soul; that He was to the spiritual life of man exactly what bread—the staff of life—was to the physical life: its nourishment; that only by “feeding upon Him, could man truly *live*.” “I am your nourishment,” when translated into figurative speech, became, “my flesh is your bread, my blood your drink.” Renan may well remark: “Jesus was, at once, very idealistic in his conceptions, and very materialistic in his expression of them.” So, at the Last Supper, when great thoughts must have agitated His mind, and great affections stirred His heart, Jesus personally present and before the very eyes of the disciples, took bread, and showing it to them, said, “this is my body”; showing also the wine, “this is my blood,”—action and language alike signifying, “*I am your life*.” His whole desire, indeed, was that He might be their life; that they might *feed* upon Him, might *drink* Him. Wisdom, in Prov. 9:5, is represented as saying, “Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled.” So Jesus represents Himself as giving Himself to be *eaten* and *drunk*. As Wisdom desires to be “spiritually appropriated and assimilated,” so Jesus desires that He—*His thoughts, His aims, His spirit*—may become part and parcel, nay, the very essence of the individual life. If the Lord’s Supper was enacted without the use of the words, “Do this in remembrance of me,” it was then simply the enunciation symbolically of the universal principle underlying the conversation with the Jews in Capernaum. If, however, as we believe, the Supper was to be a perpetual memorial, Jesus pleads that in the performance of the rite there may be a spiritual assimilation of Himself in His ideas, His aspirations and His spirit; that the participants may no longer live, but that He may live in them.<sup>1</sup>

Jesus, however, desired something further: a feeding upon His body as *broken*, and a drinking of His blood as “*shed*” or “*poured out*.” In the Last Supper He advanced a step further than in the teaching given at Capernaum. “Flesh” and

<sup>1</sup> The failure of the Fourth Gospel, which seems to have so much of the “mind of Christ,” to mention the *institution* of Baptism, or of the Lord’s Supper, while it especially emphasizes in the third chapter the reality for which baptism stands—a new birth by water and by Spirit—and in the sixth chapter, the reality which the Lord’s Supper represents—a feeding upon the body and blood of Christ, is very remarkable, and may indicate at least that the realities are of more importance than the symbols.



"blood" have now become "a body *broken*" and "blood *shed*." The change is subtle, yet essential, and most suggestive. The idea of His life as *sacrifice*—a living death—Jesus indeed brings vividly before His disciples at the Last Supper under the figure of a "body broken" and "blood shed," with the added thought that His disciples are to feed upon that life. They are to eat and drink not merely His body and blood—that is His life—but *His life as it is represented by a broken body and shed blood, i. e., by service and by sacrifice*. How splendid His idea was now becomes apparent. The conception was ethical, practical, vital. His life of sacrifice and service was to become the essence of their life; was to be bodied forth in their lives as they represented Him.<sup>1</sup>

Jesus' thought, however, goes even a step further. Content with suggesting that the bread be interpreted simply as His body, the cup of wine, representing His shed blood, is made to signify a "covenant," or a "*new covenant*." "For this is my blood of the New Testament (covenant) which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (St. Mt. 26:28).<sup>2</sup> In explanation of this allusion, our minds instinctively revert to the blood-shedding which inaugurated the Covenant or alliance, described in Ex. 24:4-8.<sup>3</sup> Our Lord, indeed, means that just as Moses sprinkled blood alike on altar and people, sealed an alliance between Israel and Jehovah, so did His blood shed for men, i. e., His life of sacrifice, obedient to God even unto the death of the Cross, seal a new alliance between God and man. This alliance, the cup of

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix H., "The Significance of the Sufferings and Death of Jesus."

<sup>2</sup> "The blood of a covenant was not life-blood flowing in the veins of the living, but life-blood shed in sacrificial death."

<sup>3</sup> "And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the Lord. And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar, and he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words."



wine, representing the shed blood of Christ, signified. Of this cup, i. e., this new alliance, Jesus would have His followers *drink*; entering fully into all the privileges and the obligations of the New Covenant, of which Jeremiah had sung so nobly: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah" (31:31); and in which the law of God should be written upon the heart, the knowledge of God abound, and mankind exult in the forgiveness of their sins (vs. 33, 34). Thus we gain a glimpse of the august idea of Jesus as He instituted the Lord's Supper.<sup>1</sup>

Returning now to first principles, we find that *ἐκκλησία*, as used in the Gospels, is comprehensive enough to include the historic churches of Christendom, the Protestant communions, and that large number of men and women, who, unaffiliated with either Catholicism or Protestantism, manifest, "practical recognition of the 'Lordship of Jesus' in their lives." The word is large enough to take in those who are frequently outside the church; to render valid the ministries now deemed invalid or irregular; to break down many figments of the ecclesiastical imagination now sundering man; and to include all who acknowledge the Messianic Lordship of Jesus in one noble and triumphant whole. What could do more to advance the spirit of brotherhood among men than the free and full recognition of this fact? The church, however, which was to be the mighty embodiment and exponent of the brotherhood of man, has been, and is to-day, the scene of the keenest violation of that sense, and largely, as we believe, because the fundamental meaning of *ἐκκλησία* was neither understood nor borne in mind. "If the salt shall have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted?" The unity of the early church was due to the vivid conscious-

<sup>1</sup> That the rite was one of extreme solemnity, and destined for the weal or woe of the participants, St. Paul indicates in the sober words: "Whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body" (I Cor. 11:27-29). Realizing the significance of the rite, we can see the utter mockery in unworthy participation.

ness of brotherhood; and if church unity is ever to come in the future, it will come, and come only, through a deepening conviction of the undeniable brotherhood of all who are seeking to possess the mind, the spirit, and the life of Jesus—brotherhood which outweighs all differences. He labors best for church unity who seeks to deepen the sense of Christian brotherhood; not he who advocates impracticable schemes which will prove but iridescent dreams.

The history of Christianity has been largely the history of misplaced emphasis; but happily the day of ecclesiasticism is passing, and the day of vital Christianity is dawning. Prior to the Reformation we have the era of triumphant ecclesiasticism. Since the Reformation the age of credal statement has held well-nigh sovereign sway; but signs are not wanting that our own time is witnessing an ever-increasing return to Christianity in its simplicity, its pristine power and beauty. To understand the large and generous meaning of *ἐκκλησία* as it is used in the Gospel of Matthew, is a step in that direction. It means the dissipation of prejudice; the acceptance of the true instead of the false; the placing of emphasis upon the unifying bond of brotherhood; the dethronement of invidious distinctions; the absence of all taint of insulting condescension. Above all, it will banish from the world forever that most unjustifiable and obnoxious of world-wide and omni-denominational phenomena, the prolific source of religious animosity, the inveterate opponent of brotherhood—the ecclesiastic. We mean the man who is the incarnation of provincialism; who forgets that he was a man before he was a clergyman; who, as a clergyman, takes but little interest in, and has but little to do with, the larger affairs of life—political, educational, social, temporal—remaining but a cipher in his community, so far as these are concerned; the victim of that most fallacious of heresies, the divorcing of the sacred and the secular. We mean the man who also forgets that he was a minister of Christ, pledged to His undying service, and to profound sympathy with every movement for God and righteousness, from the Church of Rome, with her noble Benedict XV, all along the line, to the Salvation Army; pledged to these by Baptism long before he assumed the ministerial yoke of his respective denomination. We mean the man who loves his sect more than his fellow-man, more than the universal

priesthood of all Christians; whose eyes are blind to the distinct excellencies and achievements of other religious bodies; the man of little weight, narrow vision, circumscribed sympathy; the bane of the Church, and often met with. Such a man, indeed, reverses the order of nature, and of chronology; he is the violation of their laws. Adequate appreciation of the essential meaning of *ἐκκλησία* would rid the world of him, and in his stead would give a band of strong, large-visioned, spiritually minded men, who would remember that they were first men; that nothing of concern to man was foreign to them; that, secondly, they were ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ; and, last, but not least, they were clergymen of their respective denominations, and that this relationship only accentuates, intensifies, and consecrates the former obligations. Such men will the *ἐκκλησία* of Jesus give us; and it means the passing forever of that hapless and hopeless mediocrity which now so often, by virtue of its very mediocrity, basks in the sunshine of ecclesiastical favor and preferment, and the elevation of that substantial worth and avowed ability which often pine and wither, unnoticed and unappreciated.

Led by men of this type, the Church would assume the relationship toward the Kingdom which Jesus intended it to assume. The Kingdom is the far-larger category.<sup>1</sup> The sublime conception, indeed, is that of Isaiah: "The government shall be upon his (Messiah's) shoulder; . . . of the increase of his government there shall be no end" (9:6-7). The Church is simply the witness to this purpose, and the chief instrumentality to this end. The Church, indeed, is not an end in itself, but a means; it is destined to be as temporary as the Jewish *ἐκκλησία* was. Both, in fact, derive their importance from their relationship to the Kingdom of God, and the efficiency of both is to be tested solely as they minister to that end. The visible Church is not in itself divine; it is the spiritual life of which the Church is but one manifestation that is divine. The life is far more than its embodiment, and can assume varying forms. The malady of the Church to-day is precisely the malady which afflicted the Jewish Church ages ago: *these truths are forgotten*. Much of our religion, indeed, is Judaism under

<sup>1</sup> The term "kingdom" occurs one hundred and twelve times in the Gospels; the word "church" only twice.

the veil of Christianity, and there is the need to-day of a race of prophets to keep the Church true to her allegiance, though their task were as thankless and as futile as that of the Ancient Prophets of Israel.

From the standpoint of the Kingdom, indeed, one must look with much commiseration upon the Church, both of the past and of the present. Truly it is a "tragic, humiliating, disenchanting tale." In the words of the late Professor Bruce, "To be enthusiastic about the Church in its present condition is impossible, to hope for its future is not impossible; but if it were, there is no cause for despair. Christ will ever remain, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever; and the kingdom of God will remain, a kingdom that cannot be moved" ("The Kingdom of God" p. 272). Indeed, the Church of Jesus, which was to lead the world away from the temporal and the material, has itself become painfully engrossed in that from which it was to deliver. Civilization is nominally Christian, but not practically so. Men detect the falsity of the Church's faith and practise, and, when not angered, are profoundly saddened. In fact, the Church is largely a miserable travesty, a lamentable failure; it is too often a club of self-satisfied egotists, or to express the truth variously, the mausoleum of effete respectability, the hopeless tomb of ardent aspiration and spiritual insight, and the very incarnation of those principles which crucified the Jesus whom it professes to worship. "A prophet is not without honor save in his own country," is emphatically true of the Church. Instead of being a school of the prophets, it is usually their sepulcher. To such an extent is this the case that many feel that if they would be Christian, they must remain apart from the visible Church.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> If these strictures upon the Christian Church be deemed severe, the writer can only say that an experience and observation of some twenty odd years has convinced him of their substantial justice. If Christ, His spirit and aims, are the soul and essence of Christianity, then the World's greatest need to-day is a Society for the conversion of Bishops and Clergy. We have organizations for all things save the one thing needful. Not that the writer would cast any aspersion upon the *characters* of these men, but he would challenge the legitimacy of their conceptions and methods. He is often impelled to ask, Where is Jesus in the miserable mess? In the hearts of many humble worshipers. Yes! but the closer you get to Organized Christianity, the so-called Church of Jesus, the less

In conclusion, let us say that the Reformation, with its convulsive throes, was an effort of the divine life in man to free itself from an intolerable ecclesiastical thralldom. In some respects, however, it was the birth of a new thralldom; an intellectual slavery being substituted for an ecclesiastical slavery. To-day, the noble work of the Reformation must be completed. *The Church of Jesus must be organized on the principle of the Kingdom of God.* Ridding itself of its Pharisaism, which throughout the ages has tithed the mint, anise, and cummin of ministry, belief, and lesser things, while neglecting the weightier matter of the Law—the Kingdom of God, the Church must awaken to the mind of Jesus. The Church must have a vision of the Master's purpose, must catch a glimpse of the bleeding heart of humanity. The Kingdom of God must become the salvation of the Church. Breaking the fetters of ecclesiasticism, intellectualism, and traditionalism, the Church must be free. Men must learn that when they think and act in the terms and in the spirit of ecclesiasticism, they are neither thinking nor acting in the terms or in the spirit of Christianity; that the true Church of Jesus cannot be identified with *any* nor with *all* ecclesiastical organizations; that it can only be identified with those in *every* ecclesiastical organization, who, possessing the mind and the spirit of Jesus, are striving to bring about the sovereignty of God, and that the "Church" can only be identified with the Kingdom of God when it is interpreted in this sense. When our Divinity Schools shall be instinct with the idea and with the spirit of the Kingdom, rather than with denominational shibboleths; when Sunday-School instruction is based upon the idea of the Kingdom, then will the Church go forth to conquer, a clearer *ethical* note will be sounded, and

of Jesus you find. Verily, to be ecclesiastically minded is death. It may be said with much truthfulness that the three chief foes of the Kingdom of God are human sin, human ignorance, and ecclesiasticism; and really the foes might be narrowed to two, for ecclesiasticism is but a department of human ignorance—ignorance of the Spirit, the Aim and Purpose of Jesus; an ignorance which has furnished the Church-conditions which now largely prevail. The blind have led the blind and, as usual, leader and led have fallen into the ditch. The day calls preeminently for the intellectual emancipation of the ministry primarily, then the emancipation and the salvation of the Church may follow.

a more Christian life lived.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A portion of this Chapter appeared in an article entitled, "The Essential Meaning of 'Ekklesia,'" which was published in *The Biblical World* for March, 1905. It now appears here through the courtesy of the Editors of that Journal.



## CHAPTER XIV

### THE KINGDOM AND THE SUPERNATURAL

THE reader of the Gospels is soon aware that he dwells in the midst of the Miraculous. Jesus is constantly represented as possessing miraculous power, and indeed, according to the Gospel story, He manifested no surprise at his ability to perform miracles. That which appears extraordinary to us, appeared to him seemly and natural. The suspicion with which the modern man approaches this subject was utterly foreign to Him; for Jesus, the supernatural was, in fact, the natural. While attempts have been made to strip the Gospel of its supernatural element, they have never met with entire success;<sup>1</sup> yet the suspicion lingers in many minds that the supernatural element in the Gospel is not really credible in view of the scientific knowledge of the present era, and where this element is readily accepted, there is often little understanding of its relationship to Jesus' idea. The writer believes in the credibility of the miraculous and that it bore close and intimate relationship to Jesus' idea. Before we proceed, however, to see how this could be, let us inquire what we mean by the word "miracle."

If we accept the etymological meaning, "the original idea in the word 'wonder' (Latin, 'miraculum,' English, 'miracle') seems to have been that of turning aside through a feeling

<sup>1</sup>The words of the author of "Ecce Homo" are interesting in this connection: "Miracles play so important a part in Christ's scheme that any theory which would represent them as due entirely to the imagination of His followers or of a later age, destroys the credibility of the documents, not partially but wholly, and leaves Christ a person as mythical as Hercules" (p. 51). Speaking of the Gospel History, Harnack says: "Much that was formerly rejected has been reestablished on a close investigation, and in the light of comprehensive experience. Who in these days, for example, could make such short work of the miraculous cures in the Gospels as was the custom of scholars formerly?" ("Christianity and History," p. 63.)

of fear or awe (see Skeat's Etymological Dictionary). The savage, 'ignorant of the very rudiments of science, and trying to get at the meaning of life by what the senses seem to tell' (to quote Tylor, 'Anthropology,' p. 343) would often turn aside when he came face to face with something new, unexpected, or extraordinary." Even to-day the popular idea is that a miracle is an event which contravenes the laws of nature and causes wonder and astonishment. This interpretation, however, will not satisfy the requirement of the New Testament. There a miracle is much more than a wonder. The Greek word, *teras*, wonder or portent, is used always in conjunction with another word—*semeion*—a sign. Now a sign is always an indication of something; the distinct element of purpose is introduced. This is emphatically true of the New Testament conception of miracles. Bearing this in mind, "a miracle, then, may be described as an event manifesting purpose, occurring in the physical world, which cannot be accounted for by any of its known forces, and which, therefore, we ascribe to a spiritual cause. It is an interference with the ordinary action of the forces of nature on the part of the Author of Nature—an event brought about, not by any observed combination of physical forces, but by a direct Divine volition."

Now in view of Jesus' idea of God and Nature, these events and interferences, which are such stumbling-blocks to the modern consciousness, were eminently rational and sane. "Nature" did not mean to Him what it often means to the mind of to-day. It has been pointed out that this word is used commonly in three senses. In the *Scientific* sense, nature usually signifies the sum-total of physical phenomena. It includes the mineral, the vegetable, and the animal kingdom; it is the material universe, the realm of physical law. Speaking generally, the second sense of the word may be called the *Moral* sense. Nature, then, includes not merely the physical but the moral realm. Man is dealt with as a moral agent, as well as an animal; nature embraces not only physical but moral phenomena. The third sense is the *Religious* sense. Nature stands for a totality, the sum of all things—the *Universe and God*. And in this sense, the relation of God to the Universe is not that of a God who, after the Deistic idea, having made all things, sits far-removed—an absentee God, who simply lets things go—pursuing "an eternal pol-

icy of non-intervention." Nor is the relation that of a God who, after the Pantheistic idea, is so intimately associated with his creation that he practically finds full and exhaustive expression in it—the creator being swallowed up in the creation. The Scylla of Deism—a cold, absentee, transcendent overlord—is not to be escaped by running into the Charybdis of Pantheism—a practical Atheism, with its impotent, impoverished, yet present Deity. Creation is rather the realm of a God, who is superior to it, yet immanent in it; it is the sphere of his present activity.<sup>1</sup> In this view, nature includes not only the natural, but the supernatural as well. The supernatural, in fact, is lost in the natural, for Nature includes God.

This interpretation of "Nature" undoubtedly voices the idea of Jesus. He believed in a "God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth," whose presence was all-pervading.<sup>2</sup> And not only was God present everywhere, but everywhere was He manifesting beneficent activity. Nature was the sphere of a present interest. "For of Him, and through Him, and *to Him*, are all things" (Rom. 11:36). The Man, indeed, whose love of nature finds expression in so much of His teaching in respect to both form and content, who loved the freshness of the open country, the beauty of the borders of the lake, and the stillness and solemnity of the mountain side, could not look but with impassioned interest upon the natural world. It spoke to His soul of the mystical and the eternal. "Nature was to Him the living garment in which the Eternal had robed His mysterious loveliness." Jesus, indeed, raised no disquieting questions. The abstract and philosophical reasoning of the ancient Greek and of the modern thinker about "Nature" was essentially foreign to the Hebrew. He saw God everywhere; God's Hand was in everything. "The Lord

<sup>1</sup> The Divine Immanence is, indeed, becoming more and more apparent with the progress of the scientific investigation of natural phenomena.

<sup>2</sup> The words of the Psalmist represent Jesus' thought: "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell (hades), behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me" (139:7-10).

also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hailstones and coals of fire" (Ps. 18:13). "Fire, and hail; snow and vapors; stormy wind fulfilling his word" (Ps. 118:8). Thought, indeed, with the Hebrew had found its true center.<sup>1</sup> Hence the supernatural was in a very real sense the natural, and what seems to us miraculous was, under certain circumstances, a matter of course. (See Appendix I., "The Possibility, the Probability, and the Credibility of Miracles.")

Passing now to the miracles themselves, we find that Jesus is represented as able to perform these works, whenever He willed to do so, and upon objects of a diversified character. Both Man and Nature were the subjects of His extraordinary power. Further, the tone of His miracles was always a lofty one. Upon man, Jesus constantly worked miracles of healing. A particularly interesting feature of these cures is that they are represented as deliverance from possession by demons (St. Mk. 1:21; 5:1; St. Mt. 9:32, 33; St. Mk. 7:25; St. Mt. 17:15; 12:22; St. Lu. 13:16). The symptoms manifested by the sick and afflicted persons, however, are those of various diseases now well known to medical science.<sup>2</sup> The writers of the New Testament, however, were eminently the children of their age, sharing in its light and in its darkness. They fully believed that demons entered into men, and caused various bodily ailments. This belief, indeed, they shared with the human race in the early stages of its history; a belief which has always added to humanity's weight of woe many imaginary terrors born of this idea.<sup>3</sup> What Jesus' degree of knowledge about

<sup>1</sup> "As a matter of fact, the word 'nature' does not once occur in the Old Testament. It was not until Hebraism came into contact with Hellenism that the idea of 'nature' was introduced into Hebrew thought" (Art. "Nature." Dictionary of the Bible. Vol. 3. p. 495).

<sup>2</sup> Sometimes the "spirit" is described as possessing the very character of the disease: "a dumb spirit" (St. Mk. 9:17); "a spirit of infirmity" (St. Lu. 13:11); "An unclean spirit" (St. Mt. 12:43-45; St. Lu. 11:24-26). In St. Luke 4:38, 39, Jesus Himself personified the disease—"fever"—which was troubling Peter's mother-in-law: "he stood over her, and rebuked the fever."

<sup>3</sup> Among the Greeks, the idea of demons causing a wasting sickness, insanity, and epilepsy is found. In the New Testament, however, demons are not regarded as the authors of *all* sickness or disease (St. Mt. 10:8; St. Mk. 1:32; St. Lu. 6:17, 18). The diseases represented there as superinduced by demons are chiefly of a nervous order. The belief in demons was, in reality, "a survival of

this subject was, is an interesting question. We may hold either that Jesus' knowledge of this and similar subjects was simply that of His time; or that He was omniscient, but that in such matters He accommodated Himself to the thought of His day; or that we really have no means of determining the extent of His knowledge. One thing, however, is evident: If Jesus desired to come into touch with His time He must have adopted the language and the "thought-forms" of His age. If He was the possessor of a superior medical knowledge, it is most unlikely that He would have disturbed the minds of the people by any attempt to enlighten them. Whether enlightened or unenlightened, He must have used the popularly accepted conceptions as the media of His revelation of spiritual truth.<sup>1</sup>

That the remarkable personality of Jesus was efficacious, primitive Hebrew beliefs, which were quickened by contact with Babylonia, Persia, and Greece." The tendency to this belief may be thus explained: "Early mankind instinctively sought for causes, and interpreted the forces and other manifestations of nature as personal, i. e., as emanating from beings analogous to himself. Thus primitive man dwelt in a cosmic society of superhuman agencies, some of which ministered to his well-being, and others to his injury. At the dawn of human consciousness man found himself confronted by forces which he was unable to control, and which exercised a baleful or destructive influence. Hurricane, lightning, sunstroke, plague, flood and earthquake were ascribed to wrathful personal agencies whose malignity man would endeavor to avert or appease." Jewish demonology was greatly enriched by contact with surrounding neighbors—Babylonia for instance. This statement is interesting: "The doctrine of disease among the ancient Babylonians was that the swarming demons could enter a man's body (through food and drink, for instance), and cause sickness. On a fragment of a tablet, Budge has found six evil spirits mentioned by name. The first attacked the head; the second, the lips; the third, the forehead; the fourth, the breast; the fifth, the viscera; the sixth, the hand" (See Articles, "Demons," in Hasting's Bible Dictionary, and *Encyclopædia Biblica*).

<sup>1</sup> Jesus was compelled to do what any missionary to a heathen land to-day is compelled to do: taking the mass of confronting superstition, he must use whatever he can from it as the vehicle of his nobler vision, rather than seek to overturn the superstitions at once, arousing animosity, and probably defeating the very end which he had in view. Judging from the New Testament passages, Jesus seems to have used the idea of demonology stripped, however, of its grosser features.



to some extent, in the cure of these mental and bodily maladies, is to be admitted. Dr. Sanday aptly remarks: "Given a personality like that of Jesus, the effect which it would have upon disorders of this character (nervous) would be strictly analogous to that which modern medicine would seek to produce. The peculiar combination of commanding authority with extreme gentleness and sympathy would be a healing force of which the value could not easily be exaggerated." That others, indeed, were able to effect similar cures is evident from Jesus' own words. "If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out?" (St. Mt. 12:27). Again, "John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not; for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me" (St. Mk. 9:38, 39, cf. St. Mt. 7:32). Yet it is to be doubted if this power alone will explain *all* of Jesus' miracles of healing.<sup>1</sup>

Jesus, however, wrought miracles upon Nature as well as upon Man. The Walking upon the Sea (St. Mt. 14:25), the Stilling of the Winds and Waves (St. Mt. 8:26), the Withering of the Barren Fig Tree (St. Mt. 21:18), the Feeding of the Four Thousand (St. Mt. 15:32), and the Five Thousand (St. Mt. 14:19), and the Changing of Water into Wine (St. Jn. 2:1), alike testify to the exercise of an extraordinary power over natural forces. The one class of miracles, indeed, is as well established as the other; the evidence for the two types of miracles being found in all the Gospels. That such signal events should cause wonder, and arouse inquiry as to their meaning is to be expected. What was their significance? Of what were they "signs"? In what way, indeed, were they related to Jesus' idea—"the Kingdom of God"?

That they were credentials to induce men to believe in Christ is apparent on the face of the New Testament. This intent we may even gather from the words of the Master Himself. "But I have greater witness than that of John: for

<sup>1</sup> The cures which may be explained by the influence of mind over body are probably found in St. Mt. 8:28; 15:21; 17:14; 12:10; 12:22; 9:32; St. Mk. 1:23; St. Lu. 13:11; St. Jn. 5:9. Offering insurmountable obstacles to this explanation are the works recorded in St. Mk. 7:32; 8:22; St. Mt. 9:27; 20:30; 8:14; 9:20; 8:2; 9:23; St. Lu. 14:12; 17:11; 22:50; 7:11; St. Jn. 9:1; 11:43.



the works which the Father has given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me" (St. Jn. 5:36). Again in healing the sick of the palsy, Jesus said: "But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy), I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thy house" (St. Mk. 2:10).<sup>1</sup> Too great stress, however, can easily be placed upon this aspect of miracles. It must be remembered that miracles, as credentials, can not be separated from the teaching of Jesus and from the Person of the Teacher. The three together are the credentials of Christ.

Indeed, in regarding miracles as credentials of the Christ, we must not dwell upon their aspect as "wonders" alone. Regard must be had to their character also. Jesus was exceedingly careful in this respect, as we see from the Temptation incident, especially in the Second Temptation, when He refused to exercise His supernatural power except in a way befitting its aim and motive. In the credential, there must be more than a display of supernatural power; there must be *convincing character* in the wonder wrought. This leads us to an examination of the inner character of Christ's miracles. What did they portend as "signs"?

The Miracles of Jesus were at once witnesses to the reality of His Kingship, and to the nature of His Kingdom, or sovereignty. They were as suggestive and as educational as His parables: in fact, they were parables in action. They revealed the innermost character of God—Love—and they disclosed the tenor of His sovereignty with regard to both physical and spiritual maladies. Dr. Drummond says in his book, "Apostolic Teaching and Christ's Teaching," p. 116, "The diseases cured were recognized types of spiritual evil. Deafness and blindness were the figures of fatal indifference to spiritual truth.

<sup>1</sup> Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum are condemned for their infidelity in the face of His mighty works. "Woe unto thee, Chorazin, woe unto thee, Bethsaida, for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. . . . And thou Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shall be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day" (St. Mt. 11:21, 23; cf. St. Jn. 11:15; 6:26; 20:31).

Leprosy was the type of sin. Demoniac possession pointed to the imperious author of all human ill. And death was the tragic issue. All these are routed by Jesus. The good news that it can be done is made known even to the poorest. They too may share the blessings as freely as nobleman's child, or centurion's servant, or daughter of a ruler of the synagogue. Rescue, rescue of men from ills in every form, its proclamation by word and act, which alike inspire a great confidence that no human ill can ultimately resist Him—that is Christ's mission." And again, on page 352, he says: "Christ's object in performing miracles was not simply to arrest attention or to alleviate clamant need, but by showing the mighty forces within the reach of faith, to develop in others that unhesitating faith in God which He himself possessed in His heavenly Father." The miracles of Jesus also show that the Kingdom of God means the redemption of the human body, as well as the human soul. They reveal its essential dignity, and the abnormality of disease. They protest against undervaluation of the body, and mark health and strength—physical well-being—as the intent of God. They are the precursors, indeed, of hospitals, and of every legitimate development in medical science. It is this didactic and spiritual element which lifts the Gospel miracles above the miracles of the Apocryphal Gospels and of Ecclesiastical History, and stamps them with a distinct individuality.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Miracles, however, in spite of their character as "wonders" and "signs," were not able, and never will be able, in themselves alone to induce faith in Jesus. Like the Parables, they would prove efficacious only in the case of the spiritually minded. Of this, Jesus was fully aware. In the parable of Dives and Lazarus, He represents Abraham as saying to the agonizing Dives, who pleads that a messenger be sent to warn his brethren of their impending fate: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, *though one rose from the dead*" (St. Lu. 16: 31). Even a miracle of the signal character of one rising from the dead would prove utterly inadequate with those whose mental and moral sense did not respond to the spiritual truth revealed by Moses and the prophets. That Jesus was amply justified in this opinion, the infidelity of thousands in His own day, and especially since the resurrection attests (Cf. St. Jn. 12:27). Where, however, spiritual receptivity existed in ever so slight degree, miracles would prove very helpful as credentials, and as the stepping stone to larger faith. This effect is evident in the following words: "But the men marveled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even

Jesus, however, is represented in the New Testament as the center, no less than the source, of supernatural phenomena. At the very outset of His ministry we read: "And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit, like a dove, descending upon him: and there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (St. Mk. 1:10, 11, cf. St. Mt. 3:16, 17, St. Lu. 3:21, 22). The meaning of this incident of Jesus' Baptism is apparent. Whether we conceive of it as an objective reality—a visible symbol of a dove and an audible voice—or only as a subjective vision, Jesus' consecration of Himself in Baptism to the service of the approaching Kingdom is met by Heaven's inauguration of Him as the Kingdom's King and Founder. Destined from birth for this regal honor,

the winds and the sea obey him?" (St. Mt. 8:27). After the description of the raising from the dead of the widow's son at Nain, we read: "And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and that God hath visited his people" (St. Lu. 7:16). "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him" (St. Jn. 2:11, cf. 6:14; 2:23).

We must also note that the faith in Jesus which is due to miracles quickening a certain spiritual receptivity is not the highest type of faith. That which is born solely of a response to spiritual truth is infinitely nobler. Jesus Himself said: "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; *or else* believe me for the very work's sake" (St. Jn. 14:11). "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe" (4:48). Again after the resurrection, He said to the doubting Thomas: "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: *blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed*" (20:29). Because of this fact, Jesus strove to work miracles only where an incipient faith was present, declining to oblige an enquiring Herod (St. Lu. 23:8), and rebuking the Scribes and Pharisees, who sought from Him a sign: "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas," i. e., the preaching of moral truth (St. Mt. 12:38-41). The faith, indeed, aroused in this way was of so poor a type, and so likely to lend itself to unspiritual conceptions (the support of the current Messianic expectations) that Jesus often sought to suppress the report about the miracles which He performed. "Tell no man"; "See that no man know it," were frequent expressions on His lips (St. Mt. 8:4; 9:30; St. Mk. 7:36). The Rev. George A. Gordon's book, "Religion and Miracle," furnishes a valuable and fascinating study of miracles as comparatively valueless as an aid to faith.

and fitted for it by a peculiar spiritual relationship to the Father, the time had come for the conscious recognition and assumption of the royal duty. Hence we have the supernatural phenomena which marks Him henceforth as the Messiah—the Son of God—and reveals Him in this light to the forerunner, John the Baptist. “And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost” (St. Jn. 1: 32, 33). The congruity of the incident, and the purpose which it served, convince one of its truthfulness.

But passing on, we find Jesus, late in His ministry, the center of a more remarkable supernatural phenomenon. Some six or eight days after St. Peter’s confession at Cæsarea Philippi and Jesus’ prediction of His death at the hands of the Jewish leaders, we have the incident of the Transfiguration.<sup>1</sup> The significance of this event is very great. The disciples had been utterly unable to appreciate Jesus’ allusion to His death. Heaven,

<sup>1</sup>“And it came to pass . . . he (Jesus) took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening. And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep; and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him. And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here, and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said. While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud. And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him. And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept it close, and told no man in those days any of these things which they had seen. (St. Lu. 9:28-36.) The parallel accounts are St. Mt. 17:1-8 and St. Mk. 9:2-8. These accounts are quite similar: St. Matthew says, however, that when the disciples heard a voice, they fell on their faces, while “Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise and be not afraid.” St. Luke is more independent. He alone tells us about Jesus praying, the subject of Moses and Elijah’s conversation, and the sleepiness of the disciples.

indeed, had opened their eyes to the fact of His Messiahship, but they did not appreciate the necessity for the Messiah's death. Jesus, in fact, stood absolutely alone. The disciples' failure to understand made His isolation complete. The situation was embarrassing alike to Him and to them. In this time of stress, He took the three disciples of deepest insight—Peter, James and John—and sought the lonely mountain side. There Heaven responded to their needs. The Transfiguration, indeed, was of vast moment to both Master and disciples. To the latter, it revealed a glimpse of the celestial glory of their Lord, and prepared them for the truth which had been so sorely puzzling them; namely, that the Messiah's death was in consonance with the Law and the Prophets. Moses and Elijah, the representatives of these, are seen to lead to Christ. The voice too—"This is my beloved Son: hear ye him"—would also forever settle any doubt as to his authority, placing it above even that of the Law and the Prophets. To Jesus Himself, the Transfiguration meant the removal of the sense of isolation. If men did not understand the necessity for His death, Heaven, at least, did. The Apostles of the Old Testament—Moses and Elijah—understood, if the Apostles of the New Testament did not. The voice, too, signified His Father's absolute ratification of His course (Cf. St. Mk. 1: 11; St. Mk. 3:17; St. Lu. 3:22).

Thus, whether we regard this incident as an objective fact, or as *real* only in the sense of being a subjective vision, we can appreciate the fitness inherent in both the form and the content of the phenomenon. The thoughtful reader will also note how closely the supernatural phenomena of which Jesus is the center fulfil the condition which characterized the miraculous phenomena of which He was the source. Each incident is not merely a wonder but a "sign"; each is an event with a purpose; each bears a distinct relation to the Kingdom of God. How great a crisis, indeed, in the development of the Kingdom, the Transfiguration itself relieved, it is impossible to say.

Yet other phenomena await us. The Resurrection of Jesus is *par excellence* the prime supernatural credential of Christianity. The fact of the Resurrection itself is indisputable. The artless, straightforward character of the account, indeed, goes



far toward substantiating its truthfulness. Despite Jesus' reference to the fact on several occasions (St. Mt. 16:21; 17:22, 23; St. Mk. 8:31; 9:31, 32; St. Lu. 9:22), the Apostles were utterly unprepared for so stupendous an event. They were not awaiting the Resurrection, and they would not believe its earliest report (St. Mt. 28:17; St. Mk. 16:1, 11, 13, 14; St. Jn. 20:25). "Their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not" (St. Lu. 24:11, cf. 36:43). Jesus also "upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen" (St. Mk. 16:14).<sup>1</sup>

This stupendous fact, however, was the great theme of the Apostolic preaching, and it must necessarily have been so. Jesus had claimed to be the Messiah. His claim, however, had been rejected. But now the Resurrection had proved His claim. That He had actually risen from the dead, the Apostles fully believed. Nine appearances, in fact, of the risen Christ, during the space of forty days, are recorded.<sup>2</sup> Attempts have

<sup>1</sup>The account of the Resurrection as given by St. Mark is as follows: "And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulcher at the rising of the sun. And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulcher? And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great. And entering into the sepulcher, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted. And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him. But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him, as he said unto you. And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulcher, for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they anything to any man; for they were afraid" (16:1-9).

<sup>2</sup>The appearance to the women of Galilee (St. Mt. 28:9, 10); to the Magdalene (St. Jn. 20:14-18); to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus (St. Lu. 24:13-35 cf.; St. Mk. 16:12, 13); to Peter (St. Lu. 24:33, 34); to the disciples in Jerusalem, Thomas being absent (St. Mk. 16:14; St. Lu. 24:36-43; St. Jn. 20:19-25); to the disciples, Thomas being present (St. Jn. 20:26-29); to the seven disciples by the sea of Galilee (St. Jn. 21:1-24); to the eleven (and probably others, cf. I. Cor. 15:6) on a mountain in Galilee (St. Mt. 28:16-20); the last appearance (St. Lu. 24:44-49, 50-53).



been made, however, along several lines to discredit the fact of the Resurrection. We are told, for instance, that Jesus did not really die, but simply swooned, and was restored to consciousness by the damp tomb; or that the whole account is legendary; or that the belief in the Resurrection was due to "mental hallucinations." These hypotheses, however, are unconvincing. A resuscitated man is utterly inadequate to account for the valor and the vigor of the early Church. Legends again require much time for development; yet we find the story of the Resurrection generally accepted at an early date, and recorded in Gospels written only some forty years after the event. Further, the fact is the presupposition of all of the Apostolic Letters. Four of St. Paul's Epistles—Romans, Galatians, and I and II Corinthians—even the most stringent criticism admits to be genuine. These were written before A. D. 60, that is, about twenty-five years after the death of Jesus, and they bear unequivocal testimony to His Resurrection (Rom. 14:9; I Cor. 15:3-7; Gal. 1:1). As for the theory of "mental hallucinations," we would say that if these continued for some six weeks, and had as their subjects so many different people on different occasions—as many as five hundred at one time—this in itself would be convincing evidence of the hand of God, and the guarantee of the reality of the vision; not of its illusory character.

The external evidence for the Resurrection, however, is strongly supplemented by the inner probability of that event. The Resurrection of Jesus was not merely the resurrection of a man, it was the resuscitation of a *Cause*. *The Kingdom of God was at stake*; with the Crucifixion, its doom seemed to have been sealed, its future appeared hopeless, its King discredited. The Resurrection, however, changed the aspect of the situation entirely. It was, indeed, a mighty "sign," the sign that the King was not discredited, but accredited; that the cause of the Kingdom was not hopeless, but triumphant. It revealed Jesus at once as the Lord of both Life and Death, placed the imprimatur of God Himself upon all His claims, His teaching, and His work, and showed that those who trusted Him, whether in life or in death, would never be confounded. Had Jesus remained silent in the tomb in spite of His august Personality, His sublime Teaching, and His mighty Works, humanity's

trust in morality and truth must have been shaken to the foundation, and humanity's confusion in the presence of death must have been infinitely intensified. The fabric of faith would have tottered to its fall. Well, indeed, might St. Peter say: "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: *because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.*" (Acts. 2:24.) In the light of the Resurrection, too, the disciples could understand many things about the Kingdom which had been obscure before. Jesus, in fact, standing in the light shed by this event, explained many matters to their keen satisfaction (St. Lu. 24:25-32; 44-47; Acts. 1:3). Taking, therefore, both the *a priori* and the *a posteriori* evidence, we may accept the following statement without hesitation: "The consensus of opinion among the best critics is that no past event stands on firmer historical grounds than that Jesus being dead rose again, and that His appearance to the disciples begot their faith anew, and filled them with enthusiasm for their future work."

The next supernatural event to demand attention is the Ascension.<sup>1</sup> The Kingdom, indeed, had now been inaugurated, the King had been accredited, and nothing remained but the Kingdom's development and extension. Could the interests of the Kingdom be better served by the King remaining on the earth, or by His withdrawal to become a spiritual presence—absent in body, yet present in spirit? The Ascension is the answer. The Master's arms were then outstretched to bless: the very attitude was significant of the reality. Despite the clear note of finality—the Ascension being the termination of the earthly appearances—the departure was a blessing, and it was so understood by the disciples: "They worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: and were continually in the temple, blessing God." This departure, indeed, meant the exaltation of their Lord, and it transformed the personal friend of the few into the spiritual Savior of the many. Heaven, too, would henceforth be their constant support in the extension

<sup>1</sup> This is described by St. Luke as follows: "And he led them out as far as Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God." (St. Lu. 24:50-53.)

of the Kingdom, and a restricted sphere of activity had given place to a universal sphere. Besides, all power was now in the hands of their Lord: what need they fear then?

Indeed, shortly before the Ascension, Jesus had said to the disciples: "Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (St. Lu. 24:49). In Acts, 1:8, Jesus is represented as saying: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." These remarks were inevitably associated by the disciples with the sayings of their Master at the Last Supper about the Holy Spirit.<sup>1</sup> In speaking of the Holy Spirit, Jesus was not introducing the disciples to a new subject. Here, as elsewhere, He was building upon a Jewish foundation. Their Scriptures had made them well acquainted with the idea of "the Spirit," "the Spirit of God," and "a Holy Spirit."<sup>2</sup> Hence Jesus was as-

<sup>1</sup> "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of Truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." (St. Jn. 14:16, 17.) "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (Vs. 26, cf. 16:13-15.) "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning." (St. Jn. 15:26, 27.) The Holy Spirit, however, was also to bear an intimate relationship to the World as well as to the disciples. "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." (St. Jn. 16:7-11.)

<sup>2</sup> "The Holy Spirit," however, is not an Old Testament expression. "His" or "Thy" Holy Spirit is found only in Isa. 63:10, 11, and Psalm 51:11. Yet at the beginning of Genesis, we have the statement: "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." (Gen. 1:2.) Here the Spirit of God is an agent in Creation itself.

sured of immediate attention, when He mentioned the Holy Spirit. Grieving over their Lord's departure, the Apostles were promised another Comforter. Jesus had been their strengthener or Comforter, but now another Strengthener would come, who would abide with them forever. The Greek word which is translated "Comforter" is *parakletos*, which means primarily an advocate—"one who pleads another's cause before a judge," but it was also used in the larger sense of a helper, or an assistant.<sup>1</sup> Losing their Lord, and entrusted with the cause of Heaven, the Apostles' need of assistance and of comfort in the face of a hostile world is apparent. Jesus keenly appreciated the situation,

Passing to Job, 33:4; 34:14, and Psalm 104:30, we find the Spirit as the conservator of life. The Spirit of God, too, made man a living soul (Gen. 2:7; Job. 32:8), conferring upon him his mental and moral faculties in general, and also specific powers of most diversified character: the artizan's skill (Ex. 36:1), military ability (Deut. 34:9), and conspicuous wisdom (I Ki. 22:24). (Cf. Gen. 41:38; Num. 27:18; 11:17; 24:2; Ex. 28:3; 31:3-6.) The inspiration of the prophets also was due preeminently to the Spirit of God. Ezekiel 11:5 is an illustration: "And the Spirit of the Lord fell upon me, and said unto me, Speak; Thus saith the Lord." (Cf. Ez. 2:2; Dan. 4:8, 9; 5:11; Num. 11:17, 25, 29; 2 Sam. 28:2; I Ki. 22:24.) Again, the Messianic King would possess the fulness of the Spirit, as we have seen; the Spirit conferring the *intellectual* gifts of wisdom and understanding, the *practical* gifts of counsel and might, the *religious* gifts of knowledge and fear of the Lord. (Isa. 11:1-10, c. 61 ff.) The Spirit was also regarded as the author of man's moral and spiritual life. It was called a "holy" Spirit as the power-producing holiness. (Ps. 51:11; Isa. 63:10, 11, cf. Neh. 9:20; Ez. 36:26; Zech. 12:10.) In this aspect of its presence and power, the Spirit, as we have found, was to be more marked in the Messianic era. (Jer. 31; Ez. 36:26 ff.; Joel 2:28.)

According to the late Professor Davidson, "the Spirit of God" in the Old Testament was simply "God exerting power." "Personality," in an absolute sense, was not ascribed to the spirit; whatever of personal qualities and of personal acts were ascribed to it, were due to its identification with "God exerting Power." (See Art. "Holy Spirit," by Swete, in Hasting's Bible Dictionary, vol. 2.) While the references to the "Spirit" are fewer in the Apocryphal Old Testament Literature than in the Canonical Testament, and reveal generally a lower conception—due perhaps to the ever-developing angelology of the period, many of the functions formerly attributed to the Spirit of the Lord being attributed to angels—this did not cause the popular mind to lose sight entirely of the Spirit's activity and mission.

<sup>1</sup>In verses 21 and 23, this Assistant is identified alike with God and with Christ.

and further, He specified in what direction their need lay, and what form their assistance would take.

"The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (St. Jn. 14:26). "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you" (St. Jn. 16, 13-15). Jesus, indeed, had been the Apostles' teacher; but this Spirit will now take His place. Even the many things which Jesus had to say to the disciples, but which they could not then bear (vs. 12) would be declared by this Spirit of Truth, who would in this way glorify Jesus. We must not think, however, of the truth which would be disclosed as intellectual truth alone. The Greek, *aletheia*, here includes "a mode of life in harmony with divine truth." Theory and practise go hand in hand. Both intellectual truth and ethical practise, indeed, are the Spirit's mission. Further, because of the unique relationship which the disciples bore to Jesus the Spirit would also bring to their remembrance whatsoever He had said to them. In view of this, Alford may well say: "It is in the fulfilment of this promise to the Apostles that their sufficiency as witnesses of all that the Lord did and taught, and consequently the authenticity of the Gospel narrative is grounded."

We make a sad mistake, however, if we interpret the Spirit's guidance into truth only in this sense, and restrict it to the Apostles. This promise, like that of the peace of God (vs. 27), the abiding presence of the Father and the Son (23), and the revelation of the Christ (21), is applicable, individually and universally, to all Christians. It guarantees to the brotherhood of Christ a perpetual progress into truth, born of a constantly enriched human experience, both mental and spiritual. Truth, indeed, does not depend upon a priesthood, a tradition, or an ecclesiastical creed, but upon honest hearts and the Spirit's guidance. Christ was an evolutionist. His mind was of the prophetic order. Humanity, indeed, from a re-



ligious, a political, a social, or an intellectual standpoint may always be divided into two classes—priests and prophets. The one worships at the shrine of the past; the other always hails the dawning future. To the priestly mind, every innovation is revolutionary: it “worships the dead corpse of old King Custom, where it doth lie in state within the Church”; to the prophetic mind, many innovations are evolutionary: it realizes that “God fulfils Himself in many ways lest one good custom should corrupt the world.” For Jesus, at least, the Golden Age of Truth was not in the past, but in the future. The Spirit would guide into *all* Truth. The Comforter was also to assist the disciples in bearing testimony to Christ. “But when the Comforter is come—he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning” (St. Jn. 15:26, 27). The evidence for the Kingdom was thus to emanate from both an external and an internal source—the Apostles and the Spirit. The one was to supplement the other. This, indeed, has ever been the Kingdom’s strength—the witness borne by the individual Christian in word and in deed, and that borne by the Spirit of Truth acting within the man, pleading and convincing (Cf. St. Mt. 10: 19ff; St. Mk. 13:11; St. Lu. 11:13; 12:11).

The relation of the Spirit of Truth to the World, however, Jesus revealed more specifically. “When he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged (St. Jn. 16, 8-11). The word here translated “reprove” means rather to convict, and, as Thayer tells us, “generally with a suggestion of the shame of the person convicted.” The Spirit of God, then, was to convict the world, i. e., the human race estranged from God, in three particulars. It was to be compelled to take account of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. Of *sin*, in that it had missed its aim because it did not believe in Jesus, did not accept Him as the Lord of its Life and its Opinion. Faith, indeed, is an active principle, not a passive virtue; belief in Jesus is not intellectual assent, but ethical consent; faith is service. The world’s infidelity, let us remember, is not shown in the denial of facts about Jesus, but in a refusal



to be led by Him. Of *righteousness*, in that the world would learn what was the condition which made a man acceptable to God. In contradistinction to Pharisaic righteousness—ceremonial religion—and scribal righteousness—intellectual religion—the Holy Spirit would convince of true righteousness—spiritual religion. The conviction of sin in itself would inevitably reveal this righteousness. In the hideousness of the one would be seen the beauty of the other. The positive would appear from the negative. And this would happen because Jesus was going to the Father, and the world would see Him no more. This means that in the light of His departure, the world would have clearer vision. Then peasant birth, humble environment, Jewish descent, obscurity, ignominious death—the accidents of His life—would be lost sight of in appreciation of His character, His teaching, His aim, and His self-sacrificing service—the realities of His life. Then the world would have the true perspective; until then, it would see through a glass darkly. Men, indeed, are never appreciated at their true value, while they are alive. True biography must be written in the perspective of time.

The world would also be convicted of *judgment*, "because the prince of this world was judged." In the Crucifixion of Jesus, the world seemed to have passed judgment upon Him. In reality this event had passed judgment upon the world. The prince or ruler of the world was judged, in that a new standard of value was given to man; the former glory of the world, reveling in the blood of Jesus, was seen to be its shame. A great crisis, indeed, in human affairs had come. Henceforth men must judge all things in accordance with a new principle: the very principle, in fact, which they had crucified. The world was even then standing in the shadow of an impending judgment. Spiritual insight, indeed, had already revealed to Jesus the Crown supplanting the Cross.

One can see at once in view of these declarations of Our Lord, how intimately the work of the Holy Spirit was related to the idea of the Kingdom of God. The Spirit would be Heaven's agency in the extension of the Kingdom; Heaven's supplement of man's endeavor, vitalizing the seed of truth sown by man in the congenial soil of human hearts. With the Spirit's advent, a new era would dawn for the Kingdom; its ma-

chinery for extension would be complete. Hence Jesus, in spite of the fact of His departure, urged His Apostles to be joyous.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>“Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me ye would rejoice, because I said I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I. (St. Jn. 14:28.) Because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.” (St. Jn. 16:6, 7.) Symbolic, too, of Jesus’ promise was His action on the night after the Resurrection, when He appeared to the Apostles, and said: “Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when He had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.” (St. Jn. 20:21-23.)

The fulfilment of the Master’s promise is recorded in Acts 2, if we accept the narrative as historical. On the Day of Pentecost, when thousands of Jews had assembled in Jerusalem from foreign parts to observe the feast, “there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, filling all the house where the Apostles were, and there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, which sat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” The sound of the rushing wind probably recalled at once Jesus’ conversation with Nicodemus, in which He had revealed the mysterious and the absolutely indefinable working of the Spirit: “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.” (St. Jn. 3:8.)

In view of this teaching, the attempt to enchain the Spirit to the water, or even to the act of Baptism, or to the elements, or even to the act of the Lord’s Supper, is futile on the very face of it. The Holy Spirit may organize men, but men cannot organize the Holy Spirit. Jesus, indeed, must have been unalterably opposed to such materialistic conceptions; while His spirit and teaching made Him the inveterate opponent of the idea of an ecclesiastical institution, which should be the chief depository of the Holy Spirit, and its chief channel of communication: in other words, an ecclesiastical trust or monopoly, the earliest of all monopolies, the parent of all trusts, and the most remorseless. The darting tongues of fire would recall John’s promise of the Messiah’s baptism, which would “burn up the chaff” of error, sham, and evil “with unquenchable fire.” (St. Mt. 3:11.) The gift of tongues, or the ability to speak in foreign languages, which enabled the Apostles to gain on that day many converts for the Kingdom, who would become its witnesses upon their return to their homes, thus pre-

In the light of this teaching of Jesus about the Holy Spirit, the sublime meaning of the Baptismal Formula again comes into view. Into that Spirit of Truth and of Holiness, into which the Father had baptized Him—the Spirit, which according to Jesus' own testimony, was the source of His Teaching and His Miracles (St. Mt. 12:28; St. Lu. 4:18; St. Jn. 14:10), He would baptize the Apostles, who in turn should baptize the nations of the earth. Language is inadequate to do justice to the sublimity of this conception. That Jesus' emphasis, however, was upon the function rather than the "Personality" of the Spirit is patent to every reader of the New Testament page. While He did perhaps speak of the Spirit as "he," and thus appears to justify the orthodox Christian faith, yet many thoughtful minds have agreed with Beyschlag that this personal reference is "just a pictorial personification," and that "the notion of the Holy Spirit as a third Divine personality—is one of the most disastrous importations into the Holy Scriptures" ("N. T. Theology," Eng. Translation. Vol. 2, p. 279), and yet they have not lost faith in the Spirit's work. This brings vividly to our attention one of those monstrous anomalies which exist and thrive in the Christian Church: A man may deny totally the Holy Spirit in the conduct of his daily life, and yet be a member of the visible Church, have obsequious attention paid to him by titled ecclesiastics—upholders of the much-talked of "Catholic Faith"—while the man whose whole life is attuned to the Spirit's guidance, yet who cannot and does not accept the "personality" of the Holy Spirit, cannot be a member of the orthodox (?) Church, and is often, with much patronizing condescension on the part of both intellectual and moral vacuity, accounted a "heretic." Manifestly, God's ways are not man's ways, nor are His thoughts man's thoughts even in His "Holy Church" of which we frequently hear so much.

Having now considered some of the supernatural features of the Gospel, let us say that, whatever may be our attitude toward the Supernatural and the Kingdom, any candid mind must admit that there is a unity, a harmony, and congruity in

paring the soil for the future labors of the Apostles, was a distinct evidence of the universal aim or extent of the Kingdom. This gift, however, was not a permanent one. (Cf. St. Mk. 16:17.)

the relation of the two as they are disclosed in the Gospels that makes for truthfulness. The Supernatural occurrence and the Teaching harmonize; the miraculous events accord with each other; part fits in with part; the whole is logical and rational. Further, the very idea—"The Kingdom of God"—posits a supernatural element. Such an element, indeed, was to be expected in view of what Jesus was endeavoring to do with a sinful humanity: establish the sovereignty of God. This thought, also, assists us in interpreting the miracles of the Old Testament; not that we are to accept unquestioningly the miraculous character of every event which purports to be a miracle, for we are rather to question them severely. We should, however, bear in mind the unique mission of Israel, which, under certain circumstances, would render the performance of miracles likely. This thought also gives the point of view from which to determine the possibility and the probability of the various New Testament miracles, and also of later ecclesiastical miracles.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE VICEGERENT OF THE KINGDOM

IN view of the Teaching and the Works of Jesus, we are not surprised to find that men both wondered and questioned with regard to Him. "From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us?" (St. Mk. 6:2, 3.) Yet "never man spake like this man." "Who is this that even the winds and the sea obey him?" The problem, indeed, that perplexed his countrymen has perplexed the world. Who was this man of this august idea, these mighty works, this majestic personality? He flashed across the sky of human life like a meteor, brilliant and dazzling, whose splendor was unequaled before and has remained unrivaled, challenging comparison and classification. Jesus and His idea, indeed, are so intimately related—the idea being incarnate in the Man—that any study of His idea would be incomplete without some consideration as to His Person. Hence we ask: Who was this Man? What, especially, did He say of Himself?

As soon as this question is asked, Jesus' self-selected and self-imposed title—"Son of Man"—presents itself for consideration. This title is represented as being used by Jesus about eighty times in the Synoptic Gospels, while it is never applied to Him by His followers except in the speech of St. Stephen (Acts 7:56). If we study these various passages in detail, we find that they refer to Jesus under two rather paradoxical aspects: that of *suffering* or *humiliation*, and that of *majesty*. This at first sight perplexes. We know also that the title was not a commonly accepted designation for the Messiah, because Jesus carefully concealed His Messiahship, while

freely applying this expression to Himself. It was not, however, an unknown term. In the Old Testament, we find the expression used in several senses.<sup>1</sup>

There can be little doubt, however, that Jesus' use of the title was historically connected with Daniel 7:13. There we find the historic expression of Jesus' great idea and theme—"The Kingdom of God." Hence nothing could be more likely than the derivation of this title from the same source. This is indicated, too, in marked manner by Jesus' obvious reference to this passage in the apocalyptic discourse in St. Matthew 24:30: "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the

<sup>1</sup>In Psalm 8:4, for instance, it refers to man as the subject of weakness and mortality: "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him." In the Book of Ezekiel it is used some eighty times to designate the prophet, especially emphasizing the aspect of weakness. In Daniel 7:13, as we have found, the expression was applied to Israel as the Founder of a Kingdom humane in character, while later it was thought in limited circles to refer to the personal Messiah. This conception, indeed, characterizes its use in the Apocalyptic Book of Enoch. Illustrative of this usage are the passages: "And I asked the angel who went with me and shewed me all the hidden things, concerning that Son of Man, who he was, and whence he was" (46:1). "For the Son of Man has appeared and sits on the throne of his glory" (69:29). Scholars are divided in opinion as to whether the portion of this book—the Similitudes, Chs. 37:71—which contain these references to the Son of Man are pre-Christian or post-Christian in origin. Hence it is impossible to judge of the influence, if any, of this book upon Jesus' usage of this title. But just how this title came to be applied to an individual is, indeed, a puzzling question.

Jesus' motive in the selection of this title has been variously explained. Meyer says, for instance, that He intended it to signify simply the Messiah. Schleiermacher and Neander find in it the idea of the Ideal Man. Orr, Baur, and others, combine these two ideas, and make it signify a Messiah who is the Ideal Man. Wendt finds the title indicative of Jesus' weakness and dignity, Daniel furnishing the form of the title, and other passages its content. Charles, again, interprets the expression as combining the idea of majesty disclosed in Daniel, and the Suffering Servant of Jehovah in the Second Isaiah. Others, however, empty the term of Messianic significance, and make it the equivalent of the Aramaic word for man—*barnasha*. Others, again, find its significance in the promise in Genesis that the seed of the woman should crush the serpent's head. Jesus was this Son of Man, they claim.



earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (cf. St. Mk. 13:26; St. Lu. 21:27); and in His admission before the Sanhedrin: "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (St. Mt. 26:64, cf. St. Mk. 14:62). By means of this title, then, Jesus referred to Himself as the Founder and the Head of the Kingdom of God. Borrowing the Old Testament term, He fulfilled it however. The expression became with Him not only a title, but an index to character. It revealed not only the King of the Kingdom, but one who through humiliation and suffering entered into the glory of sovereignty. It suggested not only Daniel's imperial vision, but the prophetic idea of the Messiah's triumph through weakness and pain.

Possessing these merits, the title served admirably as a veiled designation of the Messiah.<sup>1</sup> This expression, indeed, was as suggestive as the parables themselves. The same motive, too, probably governed its selection, and certainly the same principle conditioned appreciation of its meaning. To all it was puzzling; to some it remained insoluble; to those of spiritual insight it disclosed the Person and the Pathway of the Messiah.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, the implication of this title is profound and far-reaching. This must have especially commended it to the poetic temperament of Jesus. For instance, the Son of Man "comes *with* the clouds of heaven." Professor Dalman suggests that it would be more appropriate if the one like to a son of man were to come "*upon* the clouds of heaven," and remarks that such a reading appears to be presupposed by the Greek of the Septuagint in Daniel 7:13. He then adds: "It belongs to God only to move upon the clouds; see Isa. 19:1, Ps. 104:3." And after explaining how "*upon*" probably would have been changed into "*with*" by a subsequent writer to "minimize the divine manifestation in the one like to a son of man," he says: "But even if one reads

<sup>1</sup> Jesus' teaching was the product of intuition: hence its form was illustrative, rather than argumentative.

<sup>2</sup> To the Apostles, the meaning of the expression became somewhat apparent at Cæsarea Philippi, while it was disclosed to the Jewish nation in Jesus' confession before the Sanhedrin, which has been quoted above.

'with,' the fact remains that the destined possessor of the universal dominion comes, not from the earth, far less from the sea, but from heaven. He is a being standing in a near relation to God, well fitted to typify the people of the saints of God. It is noteworthy that nothing more is said of him than that he resembles man. He is distinguished from the four beasts, not because he alone possesses reason; the first beast, according to 7:14, receives a man's heart, the last has 'the eyes of a man,' and can speak. The emphasis rather lies on the fact that in contrast with the winged lion, the devouring bear, the four-headed leopard, the fourth beast with ten horns terrible exceedingly beyond its predecessors, he appears unarmed and inoffensive, incapable through any power of his own of making himself master of the world; he is only as a son of man. If ever he is to be master of the world, God must make him so." ("The Words of Jesus," p. 242.) The humane character of the Son of Man in contrast with the brutishness of his predecessors, would also suggest intense human sympathy. Now because of this great suggestiveness, Jesus gladly availed Himself of the term, while carefully avoiding the popular designation for the expected Messiah—"The Son of David." Contradicting in every particular the current Messianic expectation, it yet brought out His relation to the earth and to man, while suggesting much with regard to Himself.

This title, however, does not exhaust Jesus' testimony to Himself. Additional disclosures group themselves around the title—"Son of God." While this expression is never *explicitly* applied by Jesus to Himself in the Synoptic Gospels, it is *implicitly* applied, and is frequently used of Him by others. In St. John's Gospel, however, the term is frequently used by Jesus. What, then, is signified by its use? Here again we must turn to the Old Testament. And there a diversified usage awaits us.<sup>1</sup> Taking the title itself, however, as it was used

<sup>1</sup> In Genesis 6:1-4, the title is applied to angels: "The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose." In Psalm 82:6, 7, it is applied to judges or magistrates: "I have said, Ye are Gods; and all of you are children of the Most High." In Deuteronomy 14:1, 2, and Hosea 1:10, it is used of an individual Israelite. In 2 Samuel 7:14, and Psalm 89:27, and 2:7, the term is used especially of the Theocratic King. In Exodus 4:22, Israel as a nation is spoken

among the Jews, its patent senses are the human, the official, and the ethical. The "Son of God" is either simply a human being, or one chosen for some special mission, or one bearing special moral and spiritual resemblance to God. It now remains for us to consider the sense or senses of the title as it is applied to Jesus.

The expression is never used of Jesus by Himself or by others as the mere equivalent of a human being. Whatever the motive may have been, Jesus, if we may trust the Greek of the Gospels, always carefully preserved a distinction between Himself and humanity in general. He speaks, for instance, of "My Father" (St. Mt. 11:27, 20:23, 25:34, 26:29, 53; St. Lu. 10:22), and of "your" or "thy" Father (St. Mt. 6:8; 10:20, 29; 13:43; 6:4, 18) with careful discrimination, and if we

of as Jehovah's Son—"even my first-born." Generalizing from these instances, and speaking freely, we may say that "a son of God" in the Old Testament sense is "*one uniquely loved, chosen, and endowed by God.*" In the extra-canonical literature of the Jews, only the Book of Enoch and Fourth Esdras use the title. While it is not employed specifically of the Messiah in the Old Testament, it is so employed in these books. Jehovah is represented as saying: "For I and my Son will unite with them forever in the paths of uprightness in their lives; and ye will have peace." (Enoch 105:2.) "For my Son, Messias, shall be revealed with those that are with him." (4 Es. 7:28, cf. 7:29.) Thus, among the Jews, the expression was occasionally used as a title for the Messiah.

The chief source, however, in the Old Testament for this use is Psalm 2:7: "The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." But this language, which is used of the king of the Theocracy, must be considered in connection with 2 Samuel 7:14, where the promise is made that Jehovah will be to the house of David as a father is to a son: "I will be his father, and he shall be my son." In the Psalm, the title is used simply of one who is anointed of God, and receives the heathen for inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for possession (vs. 8). While "Son of God" in the popular thought of to-day suggests at once divine descent, it was not so among the Jews. Unlike the Egyptians and even the Romans, the Jews did not ascribe divine origin either to the nation or to its kings; hence the idea of the "Anointed" Son possessing the divine nature was foreign to them. Because of this idea of Divine Descent, however, in the Hellenic world, the term, "Son of God," would be interpreted as signifying the divine origin of Jesus, quite as naturally as "the Son of Man" would suggest His essential humanity. (See Dalman, "Words of Jesus," pp. 288, 289.)

may judge from St. Luke 2:49, this usage dates from His childhood. The only apparent violation of this rule is in the words "Our Father" of the Lord's Prayer. These, however, were a necessity, if He would furnish His followers with a model prayer. This careful distinction is also preserved in the Fourth Gospel by means of the words "*only begotten Son*," that is a son different from other sons in marked manner.

In an *official* sense, the title is applied to Our Lord both by Himself and by others. St. Peter's response to Jesus' question at Cæsarea Philippi, according to St. Matthew's version, is: "Thou art the Christ, *the Son of the Living God*." This meant, of course, that Jesus was the "Anointed" one, or the Messiah. In commending St. Peter's insight, Jesus admitted the truthfulness of his avowal, and thus practically applied the title to Himself.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the most explicit use of this title, however, in an official sense was Jesus' declaration before the Sanhedrin: "The High Priest . . . said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, *the Son of God*. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said" (St. Mt. 26:63; cf. St. Mk. 14:61 and St. Lu. 22:66-71). The title, however, is frequently applied to Jesus by others in this sense. At His Baptism, the Divine Voice declared: "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (St. Mk. 1:11; St. Lu. 3:22; St. Mt. 3:17). A similar declaration was also made at the Transfiguration (St. Mt. 9:8; St. Lu. 9:35; St. Mt. 17:5). Here the official sense, while not exclusive, is

<sup>1</sup> St. Mark 8:27-30, and St. Luke 9:18-21, make Peter say simply, "Thou art the Christ." If this is the original, St. Matthew at least offers an interesting use of the expression. In speaking of the time of the Parousia, Jesus says: "Of that day, and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, *neither the Son*, but the Father." (St. Mt. 13:32, cf. Zech. 14:7 and Ps. Sol. 12:23.) Here the reference is manifestly to Himself as the Son of God. In the parable of the Wicked Husbandmen, as we have seen, Jesus identifies Himself with the son of the Lord of the Vineyard, the heir of the inheritance. Since God is manifestly the Lord, Jesus is the Son of God. "Having therefore one son, his well-beloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son." (St. Mk. 12:6.) Again in the parable of the King's Supper, Jesus implies that He is the Son of God. "The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son." (St. Mt. 22:2.)

prominent.<sup>1</sup>

The *ethical* sense of this expression, however, is paramount in the New Testament. Jesus, at least, could have been satisfied with nothing less than this usage. He was preeminently the Son of God in that He bore most intimate spiritual relationship to the Father. This is evident from His own words: "*No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him*" (St. Mt. 11:27, cf. St. Lu. 10:22). These words, indeed, are most significant. They imply an ethical unity between Jesus and God which is absolutely indivisible, and upon which hangs the revelation of Jesus. The words of Dalman are so helpful here that we quote them. "Between Father and Son there exists a perfect mutual understanding so unique, that any other persons could participate in the complete knowledge of the Father only through the medium of the Son. The two clauses referring to the knowledge of the Son by the Father and of the Father by the Son must therefore be taken together, and not independently expounded. They really constitute a detailed Oriental mode of expressing *the reciprocity of intimate understanding*. But in this case of mutual understanding, its thoroughness and absolute infallibility are assumed. He who stands in so uniquely close relation to God is the only possible mediator of the kind, and also at the same time the absolutely reliable revealer of the whole wealth of divine mysteries." ("Words of Jesus," p. 283.)

Jesus was thus in a unique sense the Son of God. While men could *become* sons of God: "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God;" "Love your enemies—that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven," Jesus was *ab initio* the Son of God. "Be-

<sup>1</sup>The demoniacs of Gadara are also represented as addressing Jesus as the Son of God. (St. Mk. 5:7; St. Lu. 8:28; St. Mt. 8:29.) Again the multitude at the Cross, according to St. Matthew, mock Jesus, crying: "If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross," while the centurion exclaims: "Truly this man was the Son of God." (St. Mk. 15:39; St. Mt. 27:54; cf. St. Lu. 23:47; St. Matthew 27:40. St. Mark 15:32, however, has "the Christ, the king of Israel"; St. Luke 23:37, "the King of the Jews.") Association with the Jews may have made the centurion conversant with their use of the title, or he may have intended simply a demi-god.



coming" was impossible and unnecessary. This spiritual union of Jesus with the Father is also to be posited from the Divine Voice at the Baptism and at the Transfiguration. In fact, it discloses itself throughout the entire career of Jesus: in His prayers, in His actions, and in His words. Everywhere it presents the character of uniqueness. Dalman is again helpful: "The peculiar relation of Jesus to God is one that cannot be transmitted to others or be subject to change. His disciples, indeed, through His means attain the same knowledge of God that He Himself possessed. But their knowledge is derived through a medium, while His is acquired by direct intuition" (p. 284). This ethical union with the Father is also a basic thought in the Fourth Gospel. It is most conspicuous in the following passages: St. John 3:16-21; 5:16-47; 6:32-58; 8:45-58; 10:30-38; 14:11; 17:5, 21, 23. We will quote only one or two of the texts, however. "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (17:21). "I and my Father are one" (10:30). "The Son can do nothing of himself but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise" (5:19).

Now this ethical union of Jesus with God in itself raises a question of vast import. How was it that this man alone of all the sons of men possessed this peculiar affinity? From the beginning of time, no other man has borne an ethical resemblance to God of so intimate a character as to fit him to be an absolute intermediary between heaven and earth. How, then, shall we explain the sinlessness—the absolute ethical purity of Jesus? No thoughtful mind, indeed, can escape the problem, and the solution at once beckons us toward the realm of metaphysics, where we consider the *innermost essence of being*. The question then becomes: Was Jesus the Son of God only in an *official* and an *ethical* sense, or is an even more intimate essential relationship to be claimed for Him?

Upon this point there are no absolutely clear statements in the Synoptic Gospels. There are, however, some very suggestive passages.<sup>1</sup> But with the Fourth Gospel we advance a step. Implicit testimony becomes explicit testimony. For

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix J, "The Metaphysical Sonship of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels."



instance, Jesus is represented as saying to the disciples: "What and if ye shall see the Son of Man *ascend up where he was before?*" (St. John 6:62). This statement also is convincing: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, *Before Abraham was, I am*" (8:56-58). This seems to imply that Jesus existed before Abraham was born. Jesus also cries: "O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, *with the glory which I had with thee before the world was* . . . Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: *for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world*" (17:5, 24). Now it seems impossible fairly to explain such language figuratively. The language is unprecedented and unique; *it is fact, or it is nothing*. Further we have here only the direct avowal of that for which the Synoptic Gospels have prepared us—the Supernatural Character and the Preexistence of the Son Himself. This doubtlessly is the conviction which has been growing upon the reader of these pages. Many statements, indeed, in the Gospels indicate the superhuman and the transcendent in Christ. His regal tone everywhere exhibited, but especially in such a passage as St. Matthew 24:35 (cf. St. Lu. 21:33): "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away;" His august claims: to an authority and affection greater than that given to father and mother (St. Mt. 10:37, cf. St. Lu. 14:26), to forgive sins (St. Mt. 9:2-6; 5:20-24), to judge men according to their personal relationship to Himself (St. Mt. 5:21; 12:8; 19:4), and to be the peace of the weary soul (St. Mt. 11:28), are only adequately explained by His essential Deity. The authoritative note in Jesus' teaching, His filial consciousness, and His promise to send the Holy Spirit also incline to a similar conclusion.

We thus see why Jesus so carefully distinguished between His own Sonship to God, and that of other men. We also see why St. Paul and St. John could bear such unequivocal testimony to Jesus' Divinity. The Apostle to the Gentiles could say: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to

be equal with God; But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:6-11). St. John, writing subsequently, could add: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth*" (1:1-14).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See also 2 Cor. 8:9; Gal. 4:4; Col. 1 and 2 chapters, and Heb. 1:1-4. These passages show that the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel is only a fuller, and more concrete enunciation of an earlier Christian conviction and belief. (See Appendix K, "The Logos Idea.")

This interpretation of the Personality of Jesus, however, is displeasing to some. Schweitzer in his admirable book, "The Quest of the Historical Jesus," recounts the chief attempts at other interpretations for more than a hundred years. Apart from its value as a Historical Résumé and Criticism, the chief value of the volume lies in the futility of the quest which it records. Nevertheless a crucial question of our time is this: Admitting readily the Pauline

Thus we find that the idea of the Kingdom of God as set forth in the New Testament has not only the prestige of Truth, and of self-evidencing Power, of Miracles, and of a spotless Personality, which became the center of supernatural phenomena, but it has also the prestige of having the Eternal Son of God—Himself Supernatural—as its Sponsor, Apologist and Advocate. And further, the end is certainly worthy of the means. The Kingdom of God is redemption, salvation, and the consummation of the Eternal Purpose, and this certainly is worthy of the Incarnation of the Son of God. Again, in the light of this reasonable Incarnation, how plausible miracles become, and also the Supernatural Phenomena of which Jesus was the Subject. We begin, also, to realize the pregnancy of the words—"The Kingdom of Heaven"—the Kingdom of God, indeed, not only in its character, but in its source and Prime Agent.

A concluding thought now awaits us. If a Divine Being was to enter into human life, how was such entrance to be effected? The answer of the Gospel is the Virgin Birth of Christ.<sup>1</sup> This at once brings us face to face with the most startling supernatural feature in the New Testament. The story of the Virgin Birth, however, is extremely surprising when we note the numerous passages in the Gospels—even in St. Matthew and in St. Luke—in which Jesus is popularly regarded as the natural son of Joseph and Mary. Questions and allusions alike reveal this clearly (St. Jn. 1:45; St. Mt. 13:55; St. Mk. 6:3; St. Lu. 4:22, 2:27, 41:43, 33:48).<sup>2</sup> This, however, upon reflection, is what one would expect. The fact

and Johanne interpretation of the Person of Christ, what is its worth? Is it fact or mere theological speculation? Another hardly less crucial question is this: Admitting the authoritative character of their interpretation, what is its relationship to essential Christianity? Is it an integral element or a non-essential of belief?

<sup>1</sup>We must bear in mind, however, that the accounts of the Virgin Birth, when taken by themselves, obviously record the begetting of a *new* being.

<sup>2</sup>To this common supposition, and the conviction that Jesus as the Messiah, or Son of David, must be descended from David, we owe also the genealogies given in St. Matthew 1:1-18 and St. Luke 3:23-38, both of which, according to general admission, are genealogies of Joseph, and attempts to trace Jesus' descent from David through him.

of the Virgin Birth would naturally be very slow in becoming known, because of the very delicacy of the subject. Joseph and Mary would keep the great secret to themselves, not only in their own interest, but especially in the interest of the Child, shrinking from the possible base accusations of slanderous tongues. Subsequently, too, Christianity had enough obstacles in its early progress without rearing an additional one in the wide-spread proclamation of the Virgin Birth. To-day even, this truth is not among the first taught to children, neither is it in the forefront of discreet missionary preaching. To the child, the fact is unintelligible; to the heathen, it is fantastic. Again, Jesus never made the fact a part of His teaching, nor a sign of His authority. In doing so, indeed, He would have violated His self-chosen principle of appealing to man simply as man, that is, along the line of His humanity. The Apostles themselves were probably unaware of the Virgin Birth for a long while, and some of them may have died without any knowledge of the fact. The event itself could only have become at all intelligible after the Apostles had become convinced of Jesus' essential Divinity, and of this, as we have seen, they were not convinced at first. Faith in Jesus' divinity, in fact, arose from an ardent faith in His humanity. Mary herself was probably never fully aware of the unique character of her Son. The angel's message meant to her simply that her child would be the Messiah of the Jews, who had been supernaturally conceived by the Holy Ghost. Hence the writers of the Gospels are true to fact when they represent Jesus as popularly regarded as the son of Joseph and Mary. It becomes necessary, then, to ask: Where shall we turn for the origin of the strange story given by St. Matthew and by St. Luke? <sup>1</sup>

The source of St. Matthew's narrative, which is centered about Joseph in a peculiar manner, is unknown. St. Luke's information, however, is commonly regarded as having come more or less directly from the Virgin herself. (Cf. St. Lu. 2:19, 51.) Professor Ramsey, indeed, says: "Luke gives, from knowledge gained within the family, an account of facts known only to the family, and in part to the Mother alone." ("Was Christ born at Bethlehem?" p. 79). The womanly delicacy and reserve in the narrative itself is also in favor of this conclu-

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix L, "The Accounts of the Virgin Birth."

sion. However, from whatever source the Evangelist's information was derived, the story of the Virgin Birth, and the attendant circumstances bear the stamp of intrinsic probability, while the very sobriety of the narrative convinces of its truthfulness. The Virgin Birth is certainly in harmony with the general conception of Jesus as we find it in the New Testament. (See, for instance, St. Jn. 3:31; I Cor. 15:47.) Everything, indeed, seems to lead to the idea of "the Word made flesh." And if the Word was made flesh, is it not antecedently probable that the Holy Ghost (of course, in the Old Testament signification of the term—"God exerting power") would overshadow a Virgin, and become the agent in the conception? It is, indeed, somewhat difficult to see how the Word could have become flesh in a person born of human father and mother. If, however, God, for His own wise purposes, wished to enter into humanity, and to take, as it were, humanity into himself, the Virgin Birth commends itself as the reasonable expedient, as we shall see. Aptly then does Professor Stanton remark: "The chief ground on which thoughtful Christian believers are ready to accept it (the miraculous birth) is that, believing in the personal indissoluble union between God and man in Jesus Christ, the miraculous birth of Jesus seems to them the only fitting accompaniment of this union, and, so to speak, the natural expression of it in the outward order of facts." ("The Jewish and the Christian Messiah," p. 376ff.)<sup>1</sup>

The circumstances attending this extraordinary event, too, betray an eminent sense of the fitness of things. If a celestial Being was to enter into humanity, what could be more likely than remarkable attendant phenomena, even though the Being had elected to live a life of lowliness? Further, the personages concerned in these phenomena are of the sort we should expect: not the great of earth, nor those in the eye of the public, but those who in modesty and obscurity live for the inner, not for the outer life. The events themselves, also, harmonize with their purported cause. An "outburst of prophecy" was indeed most seemly (St. Lu. 1:15, 80, 41:67). That Jew and Gentile, Heaven and Earth, should be intimately concerned in the birth of the Savior of the World is not

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix M, "Some Explanations of the Story of the Virgin Birth."



surprising. Every feature of the story, in fact, bears the stamp of unique genius. How beautiful, for instance, is the incident of the angel's speaking to the shepherds who watched their flocks by night, reminding us of the fact that celestial voices are only heard by those who are near to nature's heart. How prophetic, too, was the visit of the Wise Men, the first-fruits of the great Gentile world, which was as sorely in need of the Messiah as the Jewish and which was to lay at the feet of Jesus so much that was priceless! In these events, again, we find that sense of congruity, which has impressed us more than once, and which reveals them as the outcome of Divine Logic, not of human reasoning, or poetic allegorizing. Even those who reject the Virgin Birth cannot escape its fascination. We quote from Wilhelm Soltau, who denies the fact: "Even if there are some who cannot suppress certain doubts with regard to this dogma, yet the very same persons will, as a matter of fact, seldom be able to resist the fascination exercised by the delightful legends of Jesus' childhood, which form the basis of these postulates of the creed—a fascination felt by every one who is still able to appreciate child-like piety and a popular form of poetry. The manger of Bethlehem, notwithstanding its poor surroundings, has always been the most charming feature in the whole of the Christmas episode. The shining star, the adoring Magi, the startled shepherds, and, above all, the angel host chanting its song of praise—what is there that can be compared with this in the religious literature of any other people? And, to turn merely to the mystery surrounding the early history (Luke 1:5-80). Never has the Deity seemed to draw so close to man as He did on this occasion." ("The Birth of Jesus Christ," p. 4.) A similar feeling of respect for the story of the Virgin Birth is evident also in Lobstein's "The Virgin Birth of Christ."

That the story of the Virgin Birth is true, we fully believe. If it be said that the fact is so mysterious that it arouses distrust, we answer that Christianity is only the supreme mystery in a world that is full of mysteries. Man himself is a mystery of the first magnitude. Familiarity breeds contempt, and long familiarity with the ordinary processes of nature has blinded the average man to the abounding mysteries of the natural world. Were the eyes open, it would be seen that all



is supernal. The demand, however, which belief in the Virgin Birth makes upon human credulity is not one whit greater than that which the evolutionist makes when he demands our assent to the proposition that "in that little speck of jelly at the first dawn of life—there lies wrapped up, only waiting for development, the promise and potency of the whole subsequent evolution of life." Again, the question of the Virgin Birth, like the question of Evolution—borrowing once more the phraseology of Professor Orr—"is not one to be settled *a priori*, but to be brought to the test of facts." ("The Christian View of God and the World," p. 251.) That it will stand the test of closest scrutiny, we are confident.

The subject, however, is fraught with difficulties. That the normal laws of human generation should be set aside at all seems incredible, if not impossible. Here, however, the physiological fact of *Parthenogenesis* is suggestive. This word is derived from *parthenos*, a virgin, and *genesis*, production, and means "the production of young in some species of plants and inferior animals, without previous intercourse with the male." We are told that this fact is widespread in the lower orders of nature, while it occurs in other orders "occasionally and sporadically." The testimony of Professor G. J. Romanes, given while he was a reverent agnostic, is worthy of our notice. He says: "It has been already stated that both parthenogenesis and gemmation are ultimately derived from sexual reproduction. It may now be added, on the other hand, that the earlier stages of parthenogenesis have been observed to occur sporadically in all sub-kingdoms of the Metazoa, including the Vertebrata, and even the highest class, the Mammalia. These earlier stages consist in spontaneous segmentations of the ovum; *so that even if a virgin has ever conceived and borne a son, and even if such a fact in the human species has been unique, still it would not betoken any breach of physiological continuity.*" ("Darwin and After Darwin," p. 119).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Apart, however, from this interesting illustration furnished by *parthenogenesis*, a devout mind would encounter no difficulty in believing in a Virgin Birth in view of the power of God—all things are possible to Him—provided there was a sufficient reason for such a departure from the usual laws of generation. The question then becomes, in its last analysis, What is the *rationality* of the Virgin Birth?

The Christian idea is that in Jesus Christ a Divine Being became Incarnate. Now if a Divine Being was to become Man, why was the method of a Virgin Birth chosen? A Virgin Birth is certainly not essential apparently to an Incarnation. The mystery surrounding the genesis of every human soul, and the ancient belief in the preexistence of all souls seem to preclude a Virgin Birth as essential to an Incarnation. Many persons, in fact, claim that an Incarnation without a Virgin Birth would be more real and more intelligible; that it would not lower the idea of Divinity to a physical basis; that it would not endanger the reality of the being's humanity; and that it would not create an unnecessary distinction between the natural and the supernatural. In spite of this, however, certain reasons do seem to commend the method of a Virgin Birth. But before noting these briefly, let us advert to a reason sometimes adduced, but which appears to be but a broken reed upon which to lean.

It is said that the Virgin Birth was the necessary condition of Jesus' sinlessness (either positive or negative), or freedom from original sin. This claim, however, is utterly unconvincing, because the taint of evil—whatever it may be—could descend through the mother as well as through the father. In fact, among the Jews, woman was regarded as particularly weak and sinful (Gen. 3; Eccl. 7; I Tim. 2:14). Our escape from this possibility, indeed, lies either in the adoption of the Docetic idea, that Jesus was born not, *ek*, "from" the Virgin Mary, but only, *dia*, "through" her, or the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, which would give us an immaculate mother, or the idea that the removal of the human father would remove all impure thought and desire, and with it, the sinful taint, which, according to this theory apparently, enters with the act of generation. Thus a slur is cast upon the divinely appointed method of procreation. Again it is not clear that the words of the angel: "therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (St. Lu. 1:35) are to be interpreted in an ethical sense. The idea is simply that the child being conceived by the power of God is therefore especially consecrated and set apart to God.

While this reason then for the Virgin Birth is uncon-

vincing, other thoughts are more helpful. For instance, the fact of being begotten by a human father and a human mother suggests a *new* personality. Jesus, however, preexisted. Consequently the thought of an Incarnation in a person born of human father and mother, while it does not render belief in an Incarnation impossible, at least increases our difficulty in believing in the fact. Again, Jesus inaugurated a new course for humanity. He was, indeed, the Second Adam, the founder of a new divine-human race. Hence it is reasonable to believe that such a dignity might demand a physical miracle as its fitting counterpart. Sometimes there is also associated with this conception the idea that if Jesus had been born of human parentage, He would have inherited what we might call *partial* humanity—not human nature in its entirety or totality, which it was necessary for Him to have in view of His dignity and His task. The perplexing question, however, is, How would He receive human nature in its *totality* from Mary? Finally, Jesus was the God-Man. Two natures were apparently united in one person. Jesus was certainly human, and yet He was palpably more than human: He was Divine. How this could be is an insoluble mystery. The Virgin Birth, however, helps us to grasp the fact more readily than the idea of the union of two natures in a man born of human father and human mother. (The line of thought here touched upon is presented by E. Griffith-Jones in "The Ascent Through Christ," pp. 263-270.)

In conclusion, we notice again in the matter of the Virgin Birth the sense of congruity which has characterized the other supernatural features of Christianity. At the same time, it must be admitted that the Virgin Birth does not seem as essential to the Kingdom of God as the several other supernatural features which have been noted. Christianity would not be very seriously impaired for thoughtful minds, even if this supposed fact should be disproved. Indeed, however the orthodox Christian Creed may be established in this and in other particulars, we must remember that those who cannot accept the Virgin Birth of Jesus, or His metaphysical Sonship, but who accept Jesus as the Sovereign of Life—as the Son of God in the *official* and in the *ethical* senses—and strive to do the Master's will, are subjects of the Kingdom of God, and are to be admitted

within the pale of Jesus' *ecclesia*.<sup>1</sup>

In failing to see this, the visible Church has made a fatal mistake, for the Cause of Christianity is the Kingdom or Sovereignty of God—not primarily the Deity of Jesus. Satan, however, is an adept in the game of substitution—the outer for the inner, the appearance for the reality, faith as an intellectual virtue instead of an ethical practise, the traditions of men in place of the Commandments of God—and he has played it long and well even within the sphere of the Christian Church. The Satanic fallacy, however, is becoming more and more apparent as the Spirit of Truth is disclosing the idea and the ambition of Jesus to the World. Men are seeing as never before that the essence of Christianity is devotion to the Kingdom of God and not the acceptance of a Church or a Creed. May God speed the day when the voice of Jesus Himself shall be heard above the din of ecclesiastical pronunciamientos—however true or however false they may be—and His sheep shall hear His voice, and there shall be one Fold and one Shepherd—substantial unity amid great diversity—a true Catholicity in the Idea of the Kingdom of God.

<sup>1</sup> That this generous liberty was accorded at one time is evident from Justin Martyr's admission in the Dialogue with Trypho. Ch. 48:1, 219: "Now assuredly, Trypho, I continued, that this man is the Christ of God does not fail, though I be unable to prove that he existed formerly as Son of the Maker of all things, being God and was born by the Virgin. But since I have certainly proved that this man is the Christ of God, whoever he be, even if I do not prove that he preexisted, and submitted to be born a man of like passions with us, having a body according to the Father's will; in this matter alone it is just to say that I have erred, and not to deny that he is the Christ, though it should appear that he was born man of man, and it is proved that he became Christ by election. For there are some, my friends, I said, of our race, who admit that he is Christ, while holding him to be man of men; with whom I do not agree, nor would I, even though most of those who have the same opinion as myself should say so; since we were enjoined by Christ himself to put no faith in human doctrines, but those proclaimed by the blessed prophets and taught by himself."



## APPENDIX A

### THE THEME OF JESUS' PREACHING

"THE Kingdom of Heaven" or "The Kingdom of God," was the theme of Jesus' preaching and teaching. It was with the Gospel of the Kingdom of God that Jesus began His public ministry (St. Mark 1:14); it was with instruction in the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God that He was busied during the forty days which intervened between the Resurrection and the Ascension (Acts 1:3); and it was with the command that His apostles go into all the world and preach the Gospel of the Kingdom that Jesus vanished into the Heavens (St. Matthew 28:19-20; St. Mark 16:15). The Kingdom, indeed, was the beginning, the middle and the end of Jesus' preaching.

To render this assertion indisputable, let us cite proof from the Gospels. "Jesus came into Galilee preaching the Gospel (good news) of the Kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the Gospel" (St. Mark 1:14, 15). "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent; for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand" (St. Matthew 4:17). "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people" (St. Matthew 4:23; 9:35). "And He said unto them, I must preach the Kingdom of God to other cities also; for therefore am I sent. And He preached in the synagogues of Galilee" (St. Luke 4:43, 44). "And it came to pass afterward, that He went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God: and the twelve were with Him" (St. Luke 8:1; St. Mark 1:38, 39).

Not only was the Kingdom the burden of Jesus' preaching: it was also the very essence of His commission to the Twelve.



"Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. And he sent them to preach the Kingdom of God, and to heal the sick." "And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing everywhere. And the people when they knew it followed Him; and He received them, and spake unto them of the Kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing." "Jesus said unto Him, Let the dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the Kingdom of God: And Jesus said unto him, no man, having put his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God" (St. Luke 9:1, 6, 11, 60, 62; St. Mark 6:6, 7, 8). "These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (St. Matthew 10:5, 7). Virtually the same commission was given subsequently to the Seventy: "After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place, whither he himself would come." "And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." "Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding, be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you" (St. Luke 10:1, 9, 11). Jesus also declares: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (St. Matthew 24:14).

The familiar and very precious intercourse of the Master with the disciples on the eve of the Crucifixion, also reveals the conception which was uppermost in the mind of Jesus always, and ever dearest to His heart: "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father has appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (St. Luke 22:29, 30).

That the Apostles, after the death of Christ, regarded "the Kingdom of God" as the comprehensive and fundamental feature of their Lord's teaching, is evident in their preaching. A few quotations from "The Acts of the Apostles" will suffice to indicate this. "But when they believed Philip preaching the

things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women" (Acts 8:12). "And he (Paul) went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God" (Acts 19:8). "And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more" (Acts 20:25). "And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him unto his lodgings; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening." "And Paul dwelt two whole years in his hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him" (Acts 28:23, 31). This emphatic testimony of the Book of Acts of the Apostles attests that the subject of the Apostolic preaching is in line with the statement of the third verse of the First Chapter of the Book, which reads: "To whom also he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and *speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.*" We could anticipate no other course of action on the part of the Apostles after Jesus had so emphasized the Kingdom at all times during His life, and had made it the preeminent topic of conversation during the great Forty Days.

We think that these abundant citations from the New Testament will convince the unprejudiced reader that the important and absorbing topic of Jesus of Nazareth was "The Kingdom of God." However this theme may be in the background of a present-day preaching, it was undeniably in the very foreground of Jesus' preaching.

## APPENDIX B

### THE PHRASES, "KINGDOM OF HEAVEN" AND "KINGDOM OF GOD"

IN the New Testament, two expressions were used, apparently with no distinction between them—"The Kingdom of Heaven" and "The Kingdom of God." These expressions, while they differ in form, are equivalent in meaning. The phrase—"The Kingdom of Heaven"—is peculiar to the Gospel of St. Matthew, in which it is used thirty-two times. "The Kingdom of God" is the form alone used in the Gospels according to St. Luke, St. Mark and St. John; although it is also used interchangeably by St. Matthew in five passages, at least—6:10, 33; 12:28; 21:31, 43. The term, "The Kingdom of God," is found fifteen times in St. Mark's Gospel; thirty times in the Gospel according to St. Luke, twice in the Gospel according to St. John, and seven times in the Book of the Acts of the Apostles. Twice in St. Matthew's Gospel occurs the expression "The Kingdom of the Father" (St. Matthew 13:43; 26:29). Jesus also speaks of "My Kingdom" three times (St. John 18:36).

It is considered highly probable that "The Kingdom of God" was a current expression among the Jews of Our Lord's time, because of the very prevalence and the great popularity of the conception which it embodied. Certain New Testament passages seem to imply its common use in the speech of the people. For example, St. Mark 15:43 reads: "Joseph of Arimathea, an honorable counselor, which also waited for the *Kingdom of God*, came, and went boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus." "And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought *that the Kingdom of God should immediately appear.*" It may be also, that in the question of the Apostles, recorded in Acts 1:6—"Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the Kingdom to Israel?"—we have an indi-

cation of the popular usage. St. Luke 14:15 is significant, too:—"And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread *in the kingdom of God.*" Then again, there was in common use a prayer called the "Kaddish." This prayer was written in Aramaic, and dates far back into antiquity. The concluding petition is: "And may He (God) set up His Kingdom in your life-time, and in your days, and in the life-time of the whole house of Israel, (yea) speedily, and in a time that is near."

The phrase, "Kingdom of Heaven," was also a common expression in Rabbinical circles. It occurs repeatedly in the Talmud, and is thought by some to have been the form employed by Our Lord in His ordinary preaching, but not exclusively so, and to have been retained by St. Matthew in His Gospel, addressed, as it was, primarily to Jewish readers. While it was translated into the equivalent expression, "The Kingdom of God," by St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. John, because they deemed that expression best suited to the understanding of the Gentile readers. It is certain, however, that the phrase, "The Kingdom of Heaven," was a specifically Jewish one, and that it was not so easily intelligible to the Gentile world as the kindred expression, "The Kingdom of God." Besides, the way had been prepared for such a usage as that of St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. John, in the example of the Greek Bible, or Septuagint, which was preeminently the Bible of the Gentile nations, and which nowhere speaks of "The Kingdom of Heaven," but everywhere and only of "The Kingdom of God." It is also an assured fact that "heaven" was a common metonymy for "God" in the language of the Jewish people. For confirmation of the use of the term "heaven" in place of the word "God," the reader may consult a number of New Testament passages, notably St. Mark 10:21; St. Luke 10:20; 12:33. This fact leads us to believe it quite probable that both forms were used by Our Lord Himself; while it relieves St. Matthew of any inexplicable singularity in his constant use of the phrase, "The Kingdom of Heaven."

## APPENDIX C.

### VARIOUS DEFINITIONS OF THE KINGDOM.

VARIOUS definitions of the Kingdom of God have been given, and it may be well to enumerate some of the more recent ones. To the Jew, the Kingdom of God corresponded to the well-known phrase, *malekoth hasshamayim*, which was used generally, as Meyer tells us, in the sense of the ethical rule of God, and "also in the essentially historical meaning of the rule of God, brought to its consummation by the Messiah." To the Jew, the phrase signified always—the Kingdom of the Messiah. Modern students, however, have defined it variously. Eder-sheim writes: "An analysis of 119 passages in the New Testament where the expression 'Kingdom' occurs, shows that it means the rule of God, which was manifested in and through Christ; is apparent in the Church; gradually develops amidst hindrances; is triumphant at the second coming of Christ (the end); and, finally, perfected in the world to come." Dr. Horton gives the following definition, which is endorsed also by Dr. Sanday: "The world of invisible laws by which God is ruling and blessing His creatures." The late Professor Stevens says: "The Kingdom of God is the rule of God in human hearts and lives: it is so much of the world of human thought and action as makes the will of God its laws" ("The Teaching of Jesus," p. 69). Professor Bruce has it: "The reign of divine love exercised by God in His grace over human hearts believing in His love, and constrained thereby to yield Him grateful affection and devoted service" ("The Kingdom of God," p. 46).

Dr. Horton writes: "The idea is very simple, but everything is involved in it. The sincere and practical recognition that God is sovereign, the complete inward acceptance of His sovereignty, the whole of life which results from this recognition and this acceptance—that is the Kingdom of Heaven" ("Teaching of Jesus," p. 35). By Professor Matthews, the

Kingdom is thus defined: "By the Kingdom of God, Jesus meant an ideal (though progressively approximated) social order, in which the relation of men to God is that of sons, and, therefore, to each other, that of brothers" ("The Social Teaching of Jesus," p. 54). Professor Wendt puts the matter concisely: "The idea of a divine dispensation under which God would bestow His full salvation upon a society of men, who, on their part, should fulfil His will in true righteousness" ("Teaching of Jesus," Vol. I, p. 175). Harnack, probably the most brilliant of living theological students, writes: "True, the Kingdom of God is the rule of God, but it is the rule of the holy God in the hearts of individuals: it is God Himself in His power" ("What is Christianity?" p. 56). Professor Dalman says, in speaking of Jesus' idea of the Kingdom: "For Him the sovereignty of God meant the divine power, which from the present onwards with continuous progress, effectuates the renovation of the world, but also the renovated world into whose domain mankind will one day enter, which is even now being offered, and, therefore, can be appropriated and received as a blessing" ("The Words of Jesus," p. 137).

All of these definitions are interesting, and, while they seem to differ widely upon a cursory reading, all are found to converge to one point, and to emphasize obedience and submission to the rule or authority of God.



## APPENDIX D

### THE INSTITUTION OF THE MONARCHY

IN our interpretation of the institution of the Monarchy, we must bear in mind that in the First Book of Samuel, as in the earlier Books of the Bible, "two distinct strands of narrative are woven together," the one, older and historically more valuable; the other, later and colored by the prophetic spirit. According to the earlier narrative, the distinct achievement of the seer, Samuel, was the selection and anointing of the king, while the later account represents him as resentful of Israel's request, and the bitter opponent of her desire. It has been significantly remarked that, "The language in which he condemns it (the request), *Ch.* 8, is almost a literal description of the abuses of the royal prerogative under such kings as Solomon and Ahab." This narrative points to a time when the kingship, in view of its oppression and unrighteousness, had become thoroughly odious to the prophets, while their minds were full of the vision of the ideal theocracy, or Kingdom of God. Hence, the step taken in the age of Samuel, seemed to them a sad misstep. In reality, it was a great and essential step forward in the developing plan of God. To hold that the asking for a king, a request necessary in the logical order of events, and undoubtedly making for the betterment of the nation, is a backward step, a retrogression or lapse, is to be guilty of a "flagrant reversal of history." To identify the "theocracy" with the period prior to the Monarchy, narrows the term in a lamentable way. A far truer view of the theocracy interprets it as a spiritual idea, independent in its expression or embodiment of any specific or stereotyped form of any age, and condition, or any civilization. The theocracy, or rule of God, was the theocracy, whether under the leadership of Moses, or the Judges, or the King of the Monarchical era, or the Priests of the Post Exilic period. To have gotten rid of God as King would have been disloyalty; simply to change the manner of God's rule as King involved no disloyalty.

## APPENDIX E

### THE CHARACTER OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL

THE Book of Daniel is an Apocalypse: the first well-developed fruit of Apocalyptic Literature. The object of the Apocalypse is to uncover, or to lay open what has been veiled or covered up; such, indeed, is the meaning of the word. Apocalyptic Literature was busied with a question of great importance. It was a firm conviction of the Jewish mind that, inasmuch as God was a righteous God, He would unfailingly bestow temporal blessings and prosperity upon His servants on the earth. This seemed to be an emphatic teaching of the Law, and it had been the burden of many prophetic utterances. Precept, however, did not always accord with practise. As a matter of fact, the experiences of life offered a painful, but undeniable, contradiction to their cherished belief. Difficulties arose, and the actual demanded an apologist. Especially was this the case after the Exile. At no time had the law been more thoroughly expounded, at no time were the people more true to their monotheistic faith, and more resolute in their antagonism to the heathen; yet prosperity did not come. In consequence, serious questioning arose. How could the difficulty be resolved? And this questioning related not only to the nation as a whole, but also to the individuals of whom the nation was composed. The earlier Old Testament prophecy had portrayed the vindication and restoration of Israel as a nation; but the later years of the national life found the claims of the individual hovering large upon the horizon, and pressing for earnest consideration. Some scheme of the Divine operation must be found which would take due account of these claims of the individual. Hence, in addition to the idea of the national restoration of Israel, there arose the idea of the resurrection of the righteous individual. Thus the task of Apocalyptic Literature was to disclose what had been hidden

from man, and to justify the ways of God to men. "Apocalyptic Literature, therefore, strove to show that, in respect alike of the nation and of the individual, the righteousness of God would be fully vindicated; and, in order to justify its contention, it sketched in outline the history of the world, and of mankind, the origin of evil, and its course, and the final consummation of all things, and thus, in fact, it presented a Semitic philosophy of religion." The answer of this literature to Israel's grave questioning, was: The righteous nation will yet possess the earth in the Messianic Kingdom, and the righteous individual, though dead, will receive the award of his good works in the resurrection to honor and happiness, either in the earthly or the heavenly kingdom of the Messiah.

For his efficacy, the Apocalypticist—unlike the early prophet who trusted to the spoken word—placed his faith in the written form. And while the prophet speaks chiefly to his own age, and deals with the future only as it had its roots in the present, seeking to arouse his countrymen to action, the Apocalypticist is a profound pessimist so far as the present is concerned, looks upon present conditions as irretrievably bad, and has faith only in the future. Perhaps, because of this, and certainly to gain an increased authority for his writings, he does not write in his own name, but assumes a false name, the name of some one of Israel's many ancient worthies. He strives to write as though he lived in his day, and combining events of the past with events of the present, depicts an onward movement of history which issues in the exaltation of Israel. To his own time, he prophesies usually with precision; beyond his own age, we have the play of the prophetic imagination, although a claim to supernatural revelations is made on behalf of those whose names are attached to the writings. Fantastic imagery and strange symbolism constitute the literary form of this type of literature. These are seemingly enigmatical, but to the interested readers of that day they were commonly intelligible. Such strange literary devices, indeed, obviated the dangers attendant upon open speech, while in no way blinding those who were in the secret of the production.

For more than two centuries before Christ, and until the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A. D., this type of literature molded the political and religious ideas and ideals of the Jews.

It is utterly impossible to appreciate the New Testament without some idea of the character and content of the Apocalyptic Literature. Beginning with the Book of Daniel, which has been styled the first Apocalypse, this literature prepared the popular mind either to find its full satisfaction in the Person and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, or to persist in those tendencies which led to His crucifixion, and eventually, in mad antagonism to the imperial power of Rome, to the destruction of the Jewish nation itself. The voice of prophecy had long been silent; in its stead, the voice of the scribe, and the scribal school was heard, expounding the law; it was this voice and this teaching, which made possible, and necessitated the rise of the Apocalyptic Literature. The very early beginnings of this type of literature may be traced in the writings of Ezekiel and Zechariah, but it was to receive full and complete illustration in the Book of Daniel.

This Book, according to the traditional view of its authorship, which the Church inherited from the Jewish synagogue, is held to have been written by the Daniel who is at once its hero and its author. This view predominated throughout the centuries, questioned, however, now and again, by some opponent of Christianity, or some free-thinker. The very source of opposition to the traditional view disinclined the Church to listen to the arguments for their contention. In comparatively recent years, however, a mass of incontrovertible evidence has caused modern scholarship, with singular unanimity, to regard the Book as the literary production of some ardent Jew who lived in the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, and who, for reasons of his own, wrote under the name Daniel. In writing under an assumed name, he followed the well-established usage of his age, employing a literary form with which all were familiar. Such apparent falsity may impress us as unpardonable; we must remember, however, to judge the author by the standards of his own age, not by those of our time. Judged by these, his act was most natural and seemly. It was a common custom of Jewish writers, both in the Old Testament and in the Extra-Canonical Literature, to represent messages of their day as having been delivered by the noble spirits of the past. Such a statement as the following is conservative and true: "Thus the law of Deuteronomy is given as though

spoken by Moses in the land of Moab, and the legislation of C. as though revealed to Moses in the wilderness. The Book of Ecclesiastes is written as the experience of Solomon. While in 2nd Esther, Baruch, the Book of Enoch, and the Jewish Apocalypses generally, this method of composition is abundantly illustrated, and was evidently a favorite one with the devout and pious of the centuries immediately preceding and following Christ." Of this custom Monsieur Renan aptly remarks: "Honesty and imposture are words which, in our rigid consciences, are opposed as two irreconcilable terms. In the East they are connected by a thousand subtle links and windings. The authors of the Apocryphal books (of "Daniel" and of "Enoch" for instance), men highly exalted, in order to aid their cause, committed, without a shadow of scruple, an act which we should term a fraud. The literal truth has little value to the Oriental; he sees everything through the medium of his ideas, his interests, and his passions" ("La Vie de Jésus," p. 219).

In the Book of Daniel, then, we have not only a signal illustration of the Apocalyptic Literature, but also of the habit of the Ancients in writing pseudonymously. Who Daniel was it is impossible to ascertain; whether the character is wholly imaginary, or the creation of an author who clothed a personality of the Exilic Age, or some other age, with glowing tradition, or supposititious virtues, one cannot determine. However, this question in no wise affects the value of the literary production. Some Jew, conscious that he understood the significance of the past and of the present, and confident that, in the Providence of God, he had been enlightened as to the future, proceeds in Apocalyptic fashion to set forth his message for the admonition and consolation of his age. His aim is not that of the historian: the aim is to exhort and to encourage.

## APPENDIX F

### THE MEANING OF ECCLESIA

IN classical Greek ἐκκλησία denoted the body of free citizens in a Greek city to whom was intrusted the transaction of public affairs, and who were summoned to the assembly by a herald. Hence ἐκκλησία denoted an assembly of free citizens who were "called out" or elected from a larger population. Even in the New Testament we find a kindred—or, more correctly, a less technical—usage of the word. When the Ephesian populace, incited to riot against the Christians by the denunciations of the silversmith Demetrius, sought to end the influence of the apostle Paul and his companions, Gaius and Aristarchus, the assemblage is described by the word ἐκκλησία (Acts 19:32, 39, 41).

We must not dwell, however, upon the classical usage; for the word does not come to us in the New Testament at first hand from that source. Valuable and eminently worthy of Christian usage as ἐκκλησία is in its classical sense, and admirably adapted from a consideration of its component parts—ἐκ "from" or "out of," and καλέω to "call"—to designate the Christian assembly as the elect or called of God from the larger population of the world, we must not fail to take into account the use of the word in the Septuagint. When, to satisfy the needs of Greek-speaking Jews in Egypt, the Old Testament was translated from the original Hebrew, which was at best a provincial tongue, into the cosmopolitan language of Greece, some word had to be found to take the place of the Hebrew **קהל**, or "congregation." The word selected was ἐκκλησία. In the Hebrew Bible two words are used to signify a community or congregation—**עדה** and **קהל**. Used substantially in the same sense, the choice of one or the other is determined by no difference in meaning, but rather by the taste of the



author. עֵד is, however, the older term, and signified any assembly or congregation, while לְהָקָם came to denote the specific community or assembly of Israel. For example, in Judg. 14:8 עֵד is used of a swarm of bees, and in Ps. 68, of a "multitude of bulls"; yet elsewhere in the Psalms the two words are found without difference in meaning, and denote the "congregation of Israel." Studying לְהָקָם we find that it is used in the Old Testament to designate an assembly summoned for a specific purpose (I Kings 8:65), or one which met on some festal occasion (Deut. 23:1); but far more frequently does it denote "the community of Israel collectively regarded as a congregation" (Selbie), i. e., the national assembly, "the whole congregation of Israel regarded in its entirety as the people of God" (J. Armitage Robinson), as in Deut. 18:16 and Judg. 21:8. A New Testament echo of this usage is found in the speech of Stephen (Acts 7:38) and in Heb. 2:12.

Now when the Septuagint version of the Scriptures was in the making, some Greek words were needed as the equivalents of עֵד and לְהָקָם and we notice that the Greek συναγωγή represents the Hebrew עֵד, while ἐκκλησία represents לְהָקָם. This is the usual, but not the universal rule. Sometimes συναγωγή is used for לְהָקָם, but simply for the sake of uniformity in the written Greek. Schurer tells us that in the later Judaism a difference in meaning arose, συναγωγή being used "of the actual congregation in any one place," while ἐκκλησία designated the ideal, "the assembly of those called by God to salvation"; and Selbie rightly remarks: "It is easy to see how, on this account, ἐκκλησία displaced συναγωγή in Christian circles." Such, briefly, is the history of the words. Excursions of this kind into the fundamental meaning and usage of words may to the superficial appear unnecessary and trying, but in reality they are absolutely essential if we would entertain adequate and justifiable conceptions.

Ἐκκλησία, then, confronts us in the New Testament freighted with the classical usage and the Hebrew usage. Yet both usages manifestly have points of contact; the Greek assembly and the Israelitish congregation have in common certain

fundamental features. The congregation of Israel was assuredly the called, or the elect of God: called from the many nations to benefit the many. There is an appropriateness in the word, from whatever point we view it, which makes its adoption to denote the church of Jesus both impressive and deeply suggestive. It must be remembered, however, that Jesus in all probability spoke and taught in Aramaic. While a large number of Greek words had been introduced into the Hebrew and the Aramaic of His day, this by no means proves that the common people of Palestine possessed an adequate knowledge of Greek. The fact seems to be that the lower classes had either no knowledge, or at most a superficial knowledge, of Greek, while the higher or educated classes were probably well-acquainted with the language. It is only reasonable, therefore, to assume that the language of Jesus was Aramaic. The question then arises as to what was the word used by Jesus in this connection, and what was its meaning.

It is perhaps impossible to answer this question with precision. Certain facts, however, would seem to shed some light at least upon the subject. We have seen that the Septuagint puts συναγωγή for עֲרָבָה, and usually ἐκκλησία for לְהִקָּבֵץ; also that in the Old Testament there was no substantial distinction in meaning between the two. When the Hebrew Scriptures were used in the services of the synagogue, it was found necessary to follow their reading by an oral "targum"—a paraphrase, or free translation, into Aramaic, the current language of the people. These "targums" at a later time were reduced to writing. Now, in the targums we find נְשִׁיבָה used for עֲרָבָה and generally לְהִקָּבֵץ for לְהִקָּבֵץ. It is quite probable that Jesus used one of these words. Which word the Master selected it is, of course, impossible now to determine. The choice of one or the other, however, in no wise affects the idea entertained by Jesus, inasmuch as both words designate the same thing—the "congregation of Israel."

The selection, then, of ἐκκλησία, when the Aramaic sayings of Jesus were translated into Greek for Gentile use, would appear most natural under the existing circumstances. Συναγωγή had come to have distinctly Jewish associations, which unfitted it for Christian usage, while ἐκκλησία, from

its use in the Septuagint—and perhaps from its consonance with Greek ideas—was most happily adapted to express the preeminent idea of the Christian church as the called of God.

The word, indeed, touched, in vital manner, both the Gentile and the Jewish world. It would appeal to both with subtle power. And especially was the choice of ἐκκλησία natural, in view of the fact that already this term had become widely established as a description of the local organizations of the Christians. Hence ἐκκλησία was used to translate the Aramaic word which Jesus Himself had employed to denote His church.

The word used, then, suggests to our mind the ancient congregation of Israel, if we think of the Hebrew significance; and an assembly of free men called out of a larger population by a herald, if we contemplate the Greek significance of the term. There is much food for thought in the latter. One is tempted to dwell upon the conception of the church as an assemblage of free men—free from the curse and slavery of sin, free as the birds of the air, free because they serve God “whose service is perfect freedom”; an assemblage summoned from the four corners of the earth by the mighty voice of Jesus which has sounded, and is sounding down the ages; an assemblage summoned to transact the business of the world, for such is the mission of the church—to bring man, the world, and human affairs, into harmony with the all-holy and sovereign will of God; and Christ conceived of the Kingdom of God itself as the “universal rule of Christian principles.” Such is the temptation.

But we must resist it, and dwell rather upon the primary and fundamental thought of Jesus as expressed in the word ἐκκλησία, which is derived from the Hebrew and not from the Greek source.

## APPENDIX G

### THE PRIMACY OF PETER

WHEN first brought into contact with Jesus, Peter had been thus addressed: "Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, *A stone*." (St. Jn. 1:42.) His confession at length proved the aptness of Jesus' characterization, for immediately after the confession the Master declared: "I say unto thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (St. Mt. 16:18-19). Jesus, indeed, had read Peter aright. He had seen the native capabilities of the man. Vacillating, and unstable because he lacked that which alone could arrest his being and confer the power of tremendous steadfastness, he yet possessed the quality of splendid reverence, and an ultimately impregnable devotion combined with a noble aggressiveness. Jesus, of course, did not wish to build his brotherhood upon an insecure foundation; he desired permanency. At length he has the *Rock* in the person of St. Peter in view of his deliberate confession.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The proper name, *πέτρος*, signified "a stone, or rock, or ledge or cliff." It was "used metaphorically, of a soul hard and unyielding and so resembling a rock" (Thayer). *πέτρα* meant also a rock, ledge or cliff, and was also used to describe "a man like a rock, by reason of his firmness and strength of soul." In classical Greek, the distinction is generally observed between *πέτρα*, the massive rock, and *πέτρος*, a detached but large fragment. Both of these words are used in the passage quoted above; *πέτρος* being first, and *πέτρα* second. Both of these terms, however, would be represented in the Aramaic which Jesus spoke by the same word ܣܬܪܐ, *Cephas*.

The corner-stone, at least, is at hand upon which to erect His *ἐκκλησία*.<sup>1</sup>

Jesus thus gives St. Peter the primacy among the Apostles. It was his, indeed, by right of his confession.<sup>2</sup>

Further he says, "I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." The idea here is easily decipherable. Since the keeper of the keys has the power to open and to shut, the word is figuratively used in the New Testament to denote power and authority of various kinds. "The key was an Oriental symbol of authority. When a scribe was inducted into his office, he was given a key, as a symbol of his authority to open the treasury of divine truth contained in the law" (cf. St. Lu. 11:52 and St. Mt. 23:13). A key, indeed, always and primarily unlocks something. Jesus, in the figurative language of the Orient, was then holding the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. He had sought assiduously to unlock the Kingdom to men. But now as the threatening clouds of Jewish hatred and persecution grew more dense, he saw that preparation for the future must be made. The necessity was becoming pressing. Peter had just shown an insight into His purposes that was born of Heaven; what

<sup>1</sup> "The community of believers" in the New Testament, according to a common figure, is represented as a building (I Cor. 3:10; Eph. 2:19; Gal. 2:9; I Pet. 2:4).

<sup>2</sup> Peter's name is always placed first in the lists of the Apostles in the New Testament; he is also represented in many passages as exercising leadership (Acts. 15:7; 2:14; Gal. 1:18; 2:7, 8). This, however, does not involve the inference as to the *supremacy* of St. Peter and his *successors*, which the Church of Rome draws from it. In fact, there is nothing about successors here. The Roman Catholic belief is purely inferential. Yet, the Roman inference is quite as valid as the Anglican inference, based upon the wording of the Apostolic Commission, that the Spirit of Christ will be with the successors of the Apostles, the Bishops of the Church, until the end of time. The successors of Peter and of the Apostles are, of course, not lineal but spiritual. They stand at wash-tubs and drive teams as well as sit upon Papal and Episcopal thrones. Some, indeed, of the fancied successors of St. Peter have been the "rocks" upon which the Church has gone to pieces, while only by the greatest stretch of the imagination, and the exercise of the extremest courtesy, can many bishops of the past and of the present be accounted in any way successors of the Apostles.



could be more fitting, then, than that he, after Him, should hold the keys?<sup>1</sup>

Some one in the future *must* become *the* Apostle of the Kingdom. Why not Peter? Hence we hear the words: "I *will* (notice the future tense) give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom." Jesus held them now, but Peter would hold them shortly. The first to understand would be first to make others understand. "The Acts of the Apostles" itself is the best commentary upon this passage. There we see St. Peter holding the keys. Especially in admitting Cornelius, the Roman Centurion, did he turn the key which unlocked the door of Jewish exclusivism and admitted the Gentile world into the Kingdom of God.<sup>2</sup>

The thought expressed by the words "binding and loosing" is "similar to that associated with the figure of the keeper of the keys." The sense is probably that of *general supervision* and *indisputable authority*. The terms themselves "are the technical forms for the verdict of a Jewish doctor of the Law who pronounced something as 'bound,' i. e., *forbidden*, or as 'loosed,' i. e., *permitted*; not, of course, in virtue of his own absolute authority, but in conformity with his knowledge of the oral law."<sup>3</sup>

Interpreted strictly here, they would mean that St. Peter, by virtue of his insight and knowledge of Jesus' oral teaching, would "be able to give an authoritative decision in regard to what the adherents of the theocracy may do, and may not do." Peter *would unfold, in fact, those spiritual principles which should henceforth more and more govern mankind*. This power of binding and loosing was subsequently conferred, however, upon the Apostles collectively, as we shall see (St. Mt.

<sup>1</sup> In inaugurating a movement to-day, the first to grasp the idea, and to enter into the spirit of the affair, would be called the foundation stone, and, all things being equal, because of his ability and insight, would assume or be forced into leadership.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. 22:15 ff. gives an Old Testament illustration of the powers of the keys. Shebna "is comptroller of the household, to whom the management of all the King's domestic concerns is entrusted." See also Rev. 3:7 ff.

<sup>3</sup> "The wise men, or rabbis, had, in virtue of their ordination, the power of deciding disputes relating to the Law." Encl. Bib., Vol. I, p. 574.



18), where "the special application of their authority is made in respect of the discipline of the community." In the same sense, the words of Jesus spoken to the Apostles after the Resurrection must be interpreted: "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained" (St. Jn. 20:23). Dalman aptly says: "For exclusion from the community on account of some offense includes the 'retaining' of the sins; the readmission of the sinner includes the 'remission' of his sins" (see "Words of Jesus," pp. 211-217).

## APPENDIX H

### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SUFFERINGS AND DEATH OF JESUS

QUITE early in His teaching, Jesus had indicated that death would be His ultimate fate: "The days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away" (St. Mk. 2:20). ("Taken away," ἀπαρθῆναι, has the idea of a violent removal from the disciples.) This reference was vague, indeed, but disquieting. Disturbing also was the declaration, "I came to cast fire on the earth, and what will I, if it is already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished" (St. Lu. 12:49-50). More pronounced and saddening, however, were the words spoken immediately after St. Peter's confession of His Messiahship: "And He began to teach them, that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders, and the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again" (St. Mk. 8:31; St. Mt. 16:21; St. Lu. 9:22). In this incident we are reminded of the line of Messianic development revealed in the Old Testament: the Kingdom of God, the King, the Suffering Messiah, the Crown through Suffering. Until this time Jesus had emphasized the Kingdom; St. Peter acknowledged Him the Messianic King; Jesus immediately announced the Cross, and the victory through the Cross. Such a conception outraged the ideas of St. Peter, who protested: "Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall never be unto thee." . . . Jesus, however, replied that suffering and death was the God-appointed path; and that not only must He walk in this way, but His disciples also: "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself (renounce self), and take up his cross, and follow me" (St. Mk. 8:34). In other words, along the pathway of sacrifice and service could the Kingdom of God alone be established and extended (vs. 35). Calvary itself was but the climax of a life of sacrifice: the outward culmination of a life-

long spiritual crucifixion; the prelude to many lesser Calvaries.

More significant, however, is the utterance of Jesus when James and John requested to sit, one on His right hand and the other on His left, in His Kingdom. Asking whether they were able to drink His cup of suffering, and to experience His baptism of blood, He charged them to fling away ambition: "Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it is not so among you: but whosoever would become great among you, shall be servant of all. *For verily the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many*" (St. Mk. 10:42-45; St. Mt. 20:25-28). Here Jesus speaks of His life and death as one of service and of sacrifice, which *frees* many from an oppressive thralldom. Turning to the Fourth Gospel, we read: "I am the good Shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" (St. Jn. 10:11). Jesus also speaks of laying down His life for His friends (15:13). Even more remarkable are the words, so significant of the value of His death: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (12:24). "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (12:32). St. Luke also tells us that after the Resurrection Jesus said to the disciples: "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" (24:25-27). Later He said: "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (24:44-47).

These quotations do not exhaust the passages relating to the value of Christ's death, but they suffice to show its importance.

Jesus' own conviction in regard to His death was along these lines. (1) His loyalty to Truth, and His fearless exposure of Pharisaic religion would lead inevitably to a violent death at the hands of the leaders of the nation. (2) This, however, was the God-appointed path, analogous to that trodden by the prophets, essential to the establishment of the Kingdom, and voluntarily accepted by Jesus. (3) This course, however, would lead to vast benefit to many, being the means of their delivery from the slavery of sin. To such an end, He lived; for such an end, He would die. His death and His life—the two are to be united—would *ransom* many. *How* this ransom would be effected, and *why* it must be effected, Jesus did not disclose. That His life and death *are* effective to this end, the experience of thousands attests. Possibly no specific ways and reasons were present even to the mind of the Master. The great *fact* He stated, leaving humanity to experience its blessings, and to translate it into thought as best it could. All attempts to explain the fact may be helpful, but none can be entirely satisfactory, for the fact defies human comprehension. Jesus, then, was a supreme sacrifice, whether in life or in death, sacrifice of self to God's obedience. To interpret His sacrifice in the sense of the Jewish sacrificial system, is unworthy. Even the prophets had detected that God desired only the sacrifice of the inner life. This sacrifice Jesus made; and this had broken the power of Satan, and set humanity upon a new course. The word "*ransom*" with Jesus was untechnical—a term of poetic and mystic meaning. It represented a sum-total: the effect of His personality, His career, and His work.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Greek—*λύτρον*—ransom, may have two Hebrew equivalents, and correspond in sense to their meaning. The first is *קָנָה* or *נָאֵל*, which suggests "the money payments required under the Law to secure the release of persons from slavery" (Ex. 21:8, Lev. 25:47-49). The second is *בִּכּוּר* (literally, a "covering") used in the sense of a "propitiatory gift"—"restricted, however, by usage to a gift offered as a satisfaction for a life; it may denote the ransom paid by an offender either to man (Ex. 21:30, Nu. 35:30-32, Ps. 6:35), or to God (Ex. 30:12, Ps. 49:7) in order to save the life which he has forfeited by his wrongdoing."

## APPENDIX · I

### THE POSSIBILITY, THE PROBABILITY AND THE CREDIBILITY OF MIRACLES

THE fallacious idea of nature, so popular to-day, as a hard and fast working of invariable laws which brook no interruption or interference, was not entertained by Jesus. The conception "that nothing happens in nature which is in contradiction with its universal laws," and that nature, apart from God, includes all that is—hence a miracle cannot be—was far from Jesus' thought. It was true that nature did proceed in an orderly manner; the natural world was cosmos, not chaos; yet God was not fettered to the accustomed modes of action. "Nature is, indeed, governed by law and not by caprice: that we know and are assured of. But such a formula does not settle the matter. A wise and prudent man's life is also governed by law and not by caprice, and yet the intervention of his moral reason, of his power of choice, disturbs from time to time the semblance of uniformity in his conduct. For him the same physical antecedents do not always issue in the same physical consequences, because moral considerations—non-physical motives—may sway him now in this direction, and now in that. Thus in the case of man, who is a part, and an important part, of nature, the rule of uniformity does not hold absolutely. And when we remember that the Divine Will must be, at the least, as independent of physical law as is man's will, we see no ground for regarding the 'Uniformity of Nature' as a constitutive principle of the Cosmos. It is nothing more than a convenient way of saying that God's laws are *general* laws; that He does not depart from the usual method of His rule without the gravest reasons for intervention." (Art. "Nature," p. 495).

Again, Jesus would not be troubled with the objection raised to-day, that such departures from the usual methods of

action would involve a loss of prestige on the part of Deity, inasmuch as the necessity for such interferences impugned the Divine Wisdom. This seems, indeed, a plausible argument. We must remember, however, that God in the beginning created man a free agent,—capable of choice. This action certainly did not impugn the wisdom of God. Hence, if man was unwise enough to use his liberty in making a wrong choice, and consequently found himself in hopeless entanglements, incapable of giving himself entire relief, no matter how assiduously he sought to accommodate himself to the natural order, and God was the *Father-God*, as Jesus conceived that He was, what could be more fitting than that God should bring into play unusual means and extraordinary power to relieve the fatal condition of His beloved child? That this was the condition of mankind we have had full opportunity to see; that this was the course adopted by God, we shall soon see.

Men, however, are often antagonized by the idea of any break occurring in the established order of nature; hence explanations of miracles are often adduced, which seek to mitigate the rigors of this antagonism. The Duke of Argyll, for instance, writes in his "Reign of Law": "Miracles may be wrought by the selection and use of laws of which man knows and can know nothing, and which, if he did know, he could not employ" (p. 16). Too great stress, however, must not be placed upon nature's accustomed order, for nature itself presents certain inexplicable breaks: for example, the step from the inorganic to the organic, and from consciousness to self-consciousness. "Nature's order and continuity, indeed, is simply a generalization from observed phenomena, and of use in scientific investigation. At the same time, it must be admitted that miracles are not necessarily to be thought of *as violations of physical law*. 'Physical Law,' indeed, in its entirety, we do not know. There may be many combinations of physical forces known to the Creator, which will produce what we call miracles, and which are now entirely beyond our ken. Huxley wrote very wisely: 'If a dead man did come to life, the fact would be evidence, not that any law of nature had been violated, but that those laws, even when they express the results of a very long and uniform experience, are necessarily based on incomplete knowledge, and are to be held only on grounds of



more or less justifiable expectation.' " He also admits the possibility of miracles: "Denying the possibility of miracles seems to me quite as unjustifiable as speculative Atheism."

Miracles, however, are attacked not only on the ground of "possibility," but also of "credibility." The idea is that if miracles actually happened they could not be proved by human testimony, for they are absolutely incredible in view of "the firm and unalterable experience" which has established the laws of nature. That humanity's experience has been "firm and unalterable" in this respect is the very point at issue, and to affirm that it has been is simply unjustifiable dogmatism. Human testimony *can* establish and substantiate miracles, although such testimony must be very jealously received, weighed, and tested, and it must be assisted by an inherent fitness in the miracle itself, which shall commend it to the intellectual and the moral nature of man. That Jesus worked what purported to be miracles is supported by convincing human testimony. The belief in His miracles, indeed, is found to have been universally accepted at a very early date, and the miracles themselves are recorded in writings which follow so closely upon the events described, as practically to preclude the possibility of the growth of legends of miraculous cures and works, which grouped themselves around the unique personality of the Man Jesus. Sufficient time perhaps had elapsed, however, for the possible addition of legendary elements to the separate accounts of miracles which were really wrought by Christ. This fact should be remembered in a study of the miracles of Jesus.

## APPENDIX J

### THE METAPHYSICAL SONSHIP OF JESUS IN THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

LET us take, for instance, the passage recently quoted: "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." While this passage does not reveal "what idea Jesus entertained in regard to the genesis of His divine Sonship," it can be said that it appears "to imply that *Jesus had shown no cognizance of any beginning in this relationship*. It seems to be an innate property of His personality, seeing that He, as distinct from all others, holds for His own the claim to the sovereignty of the world, and the immediate knowledge of God, just as a son by right of birth becomes an heir, and by upbringing from childhood in undivided fellowship with the father enters into that spiritual relationship with the father, which is natural for the child." The passage, indeed, is very suggestive, and if the interpretation of Professor Bruce is justifiable, namely, that the passage marks the Son as the revealer of the Father to those in the past, who did not know the historical Christ, an additional interest is given to the statement. "The claim is not meant to exclude from saving knowledge of God all who are ignorant of the historical Christ. It is meant rather to teach, that whoever has such knowledge, whether within Christendom or without, gets his illumination from the Son who perfectly knows the Father. *Does not this point to a being of the Son independent of space and time?*" ("The Kingdom of God," p. 185.)

Again the words of St. Mark 13:32 are thought-provoking. "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." Most explicit testimony, however, is derived from an interview of Jesus with the Pharisees. Jesus asked them about the

meaning of the one hundredth and tenth Psalm.<sup>1</sup>

The interview is given by St. Matthew as follows: "While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word. (22:41-46, cf. St. Mk. 12:25-37; St. Lu. 20:41-44.)

The significance of this colloquy is so well brought out by Dalman that we quote his words at length. "The aim—is the same—to awaken reflection in regard to the descent of the Messiah rather than to his dignity or exalted rank. There would indeed be nothing remarkable in the fact that a son should attain to a higher rank than his father, and for the Scribes it would not in the least be strange that the Messiah should be greater than David. On that point they did not, in fact, require any instruction. Justin Martyr says ("Dialogue with Trypho," 33, 83) that the Jews of his time applied Psalm 110 to Hezekiah; so it appeared to them possible that David should call this king his Lord—*An unbiased reading of the statement of Jesus cannot avoid the conclusion that the Messiah is in reality the Son of One more exalted than David, that is, the Son of God.* And in that idea there was nothing extravagant. If Jesus was conscious of no beginning in his peculiar relationship to God, it must, of course, have had its genesis with His birth; and, further, God must have so participated in assigning that position, that the human factors concerned fell entirely into the background. The prophet Jeremiah, according to Jer. 1:5, prided himself in his prenatal election by God to prophecy; and Isa. 49:5 says that the servant of the Lord was formed from the womb for his appointed function. Why should Jesus, conscious of being the servant of the Lord whom Isaiah predicted, not have had a similar consciousness in regard to Himself? Only it would be natural

<sup>1</sup>David was universally thought of as the author of this Psalm. The Psalm, in fact, was only composed in the time of David, and was addressed to him. This fact, however, does not affect in any way the impression which Jesus was seeking to give.

that He, being 'the Son,' as distinguished from all servants, should presuppose, not merely selection and predestination, but also a creative act on the part of God, rendering Him what no one, who stands in a merely natural connection with mankind, can ever by his own efforts become. This idea is in no way opposed to the other, that Jesus called Himself 'Son of Man.' For all the sublimity of which He was conscious in regard to His past, present, and future, never excludes the idea that for the present, by decree of the Divine Providence, He moves about among mankind, defenceless and weak. We do not find expressed the idea of God's becoming man, or of a twofold nature united in a single person; but there is attested the presence of One who appears in human weakness, who is a perfect Revealer of God and the future Ruler of the world, who has been bestowed upon the world by the supernatural power of God." ("Words of Jesus," pp. 285, 6, 7.)

Thus far, indeed, the Synoptic Gospels lead us into the realm of metaphysics.

## APPENDIX K

### THE LOGOS IDEA

WHY St. John should refer to Jesus as the "Word," and his intention in doing so, will become apparent in a moment.<sup>1</sup>

St. John used this term as the result of a continuous development of an idea. In Genesis, Creation is regarded as due to a command or *word* of God. In later poetical descriptions of creation, there is a quasi-personification of this idea: "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made" (Ps. 33:6; cf. 107:2; 147:15, 18; 148:8). In Isaiah 5:10 there is a more poetic personification of the thought. Then by development, revelation, or the message of God to men, came to be called "the word of the Lord." Hence we read: "the word of the Lord *came*" (Micah 1:1); "the word which Isaiah *saw*" (Isa. 2:1; cf. Amos 1:1). In the Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament, there is a fuller development. The "word" becomes "an agent of God in the accomplishment of his gracious will and purpose" (Job. 28:12-28; Prov. 8:22-31). And passing from the Canonical Scriptures to the Apocryphal Wisdom Literature, we find a still more pronounced development. (Ecclesiasticus 1:4-10; 24:3-12, 32:33.) We quote only an interesting passage from the Wisdom of Solomon: "For she is a breath of the power of God, and a clear effulgence of the glory of the Almighty; therefore can nothing defiled find entrance into her. For she is an effulgence from everlasting light, and an unspotted mirror of the working of God, and an image of his goodness. And she, being one, hath power to do all things; and remaining in herself, reneweth all things, etc.";—"Who madeth all things *by thy word*" (9:1). This is also worthy of quotation: "Thine *all-powerful word* leaped from

<sup>1</sup> The Greek term translated "word" is *logos*. This word in Classical Greek meant both a "word" and "reason"; in Biblical Greek, however, it is used chiefly in the sense of "word."

heaven out of the royal throne, a stern warrior, into the midst of the doomed land, bearing as a sharp sword thine unfeigned commandment." (Revised Version, 18:15, 16.)

In the Targums, or Aramaic paraphrases of the Hebrew Scriptures used in Our Lord's time, the same tendency is manifest. The word of Jehovah is personified, and represented as an intermediary between God and the world. Acts of God were attributed to the Divine Word. For instance, the Targums say: "They heard the voice of the *Word* of the Lord God walking in the Garden" (Gen. 3:8.) This evidence leads us to the important conclusion expressed in the following words: "*Thus Hebrew thought tended to represent God's self-manifestation as mediated by an agent, more or less conceived as personal, and yet blending with the divine personality itself.*" Now with this tendency and with this usage of "the word," the writer of the Fourth Gospel as a Palestinian Jew would be familiar.

There was, however, another interesting use of this expression. The Greeks were busied with the problem as to how a transcendent God could come into relation with the world. To bridge this gulf, they made use of "ideas," and *logos* came to stand for the "reason" of Deity. This feature of the Greek Philosophy was borrowed by an Alexandrian Jew—Philo—who sought to harmonize the Old Testament Revelation with Greek Philosophy. "Philo adopted after others, the term *logos*, probably because it was familiar to both Judaism and Hellenism, to denote the total manifestation of divine powers and ideas in the universe. God is abstract being, without qualities, but from Him has proceeded the *Logos*, His rational thought, which first existed, as the ideal world in the divine mind, and then formed and inhabited the actual cosmos." Thus in Philo's thought, the "word" of the Old Testament was the chief idea, "through which God mediated His communication with the world." It was the agent of creation and of the administration of the world, and was spoken of as "the first-born Son of God," and "the second God." In the personification of this idea, however, Philo was not always unequivocal or consistent. Now with this usage of the word "logos," St. John was also probably familiar. While some scholars maintain that he derived his doctrine from the Old Testament use of the expression, and others contend for the



Philonic source, the most probable view is "that St. John adopted his Logos phraseology because in both Jewish and Gentile circles, the term was familiar. *It was a leading term by which religious thought was striving to express the idea, though with much misconception, of an all-comprehensive, all-wise, and directly active revelation of God to the world.*"

How readily, then, St. John would adopt it! The Apostle was an old man, and he had grown old in meditating upon the august mystery of the Christ. His Gospel is meditative throughout, not argumentative. Reflection upon Jesus' testimony to Himself, His Personality, and His teaching, had led St. John to a great conclusion. But how could he express his thought? The *logos* idea was at hand. Thoughtful years and spiritual insight availed themselves of the waiting word, and we have the triumphant strains of the opening verses of the Fourth Gospel. The declarations are not based, however, upon philosophic speculation, but upon reflection, which has worked up Jesus' own testimony, and at length states its conclusion. For St. John, Jesus was the preexistent Son of God who became incarnate: the Word who existed in the beginning, perhaps of time, or at least, of creation; who was in relationship with God, and who was God in His essential nature; who was the medium of creation, the author of life—physical, mental, spiritual—and the light or illumination of men, yet often uncomprehended because of the darkness of the human mind; who was borne witness to by John the Baptist; *who eventually became man, and dwelt among us*; who was rejected by his own—the Jews; who was, however, received by others, to whom He gave power to become sons of God. In this conclusion, spiritual insight and experience have largely concurred.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> St. John, however, from whatever source he derived his Logos doctrine, made his own distinctive contribution to it. If his doctrine was related to the Philonic doctrine, it yet bears distinctive marks. Professor W. F. Adeny, in the *Biblical World* for July, 1905, thus summarizes them: "In particular there are four, viz.: (1) the sense of *word* attached to the term 'Logos,' rather than that of *reason*; (2) the personality of the Logos; (3) his incarnation; (4) his identifications when incarnate with the Jewish Messiah." ("The Relation of New Testament Theology to Alexandrian Thought.") Consult also Stevens' "N. T. Theology," pp. 576-585, and Articles "Logos" and "Philo" in Hastings' Bible Dictionary; also Sanday's "Criticism of the Fourth Gospel," Lecture 6, pp. 185-205.

## APPENDIX L

### THE ACCOUNTS OF THE VIRGIN BIRTH

A RÉSUMÉ of the story may not be amiss. According to St. Matthew, a virgin, Mary by name, who was espoused to Joseph, was (before they were wedded) found to be with child by the Holy Ghost. Joseph, being a strict follower of the law, and yet unwilling to see Mary suffer the penalty of the law, determined to put her away privately. An angel of the Lord, however, appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost, and she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins."<sup>1</sup>

Joseph obeys the angel's command, but does not enter into marital relations with his wife until she had brought forth her first-born son.

The birth of the Child took place in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod. Then Wise Men from the East, led

<sup>1</sup>The Evangelist finds in this event the fulfilment of Isa. 7:14. This use of the passage, however, must be looked upon leniently. The passage itself did not and cannot refer to a Virgin Birth. The word translated "virgin" really means "young woman." Dalman is again helpful: "The Jewish common people never expected the Messiah to be born of a Virgin; and no trace is to be found among the Jews of any Messianic application of Isaiah's words (7:14) concerning the virgin's son, from which by any possibility—as some have maintained—the whole account of the miraculous birth of Jesus could have derived its origin." ("Words of Jesus," p. 276.) Apropos of the New Testament use of this and similar Old Testament passages, the words of the late Professor A. B. Davidson are suggestive: "In general, it was more the actual life of Christ that suggested to New Testament writers the application to Him of Old Testament passages, than a prevalent method of interpreting the passages. They saw in His life the full religious meaning of the passages, and the question of their original sense or application did not occur to them."

by a star, came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" Herod, learning of their inquiry, assembled the chief priests and the scribes, and asked where the Messiah was to be born. In consonance with Micah 5:1, 2, they pointed to Bethlehem of Judea. Then, after inquiring of the Magi as to the time of the star's appearance, Herod sends them away to search for the Child and urges that they bring him word again. Led by the star, they followed until it stood over the house where the young Child and His Mother were. Entering, they make obeisance to the Babe, and present gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. They are then warned in a dream not to return to Herod, and they set out for their country by another route. Joseph is also warned by an angel to take the Child and His Mother, and to flee into Egypt to escape from Herod. There they remain until Herod's death, and thus fulfil the prophecy of Hosea 11:1. Herod, however, greatly angered, decrees the murder of all male children of two years of age and under in Bethlehem, and its borders. When Herod was dead, however, Joseph was commanded by an angel to return from Egypt. Hearing that Archelaus, Herod's son, was reigning, Joseph was fearful, and was directed by God in a dream to turn to Nazareth of Galilee. (St. Mt. 1:18-25; 2.)

St. Luke's account of the birth of Jesus, and its attendant circumstances, is more detailed. He begins with an appearance of the angel Gabriel to the old priest, Zacharias, as he was engaged in the Temple, and the announcement that his aged wife—the barren Elizabeth—would become the joyful mother of a son, who should, in the spirit and power of Elijah, prepare the people for the Lord's coming. Doubting the news, and asking its corroboration, Zacharias is stricken with dumbness. His wife conceives, however, and goes into retirement. Then in the sixth month, Gabriel visits Mary, the virgin espoused to Joseph, and announces that she is to bear a son: "He shall be called great, and shall be called the son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." (Here in the very forefront again is the idea of the Kingdom of God.) Troubled because she was unmarried, she hears: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow

thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Mary's attention is also directed to the condition of her cousin Elizabeth. She at once seeks Elizabeth in the hill country of Judea, and is greeted with the words: "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb," while the unborn John leaped in his mother's womb. Mary in reply utters the Magnificat—a chant of praise, modeled probably upon Hannah's song in I Sam. 2, 1ff. After three months, Mary returns to her home, and Elizabeth gives birth to a son. On the eighth day the child is circumcised, and a name is given under peculiar circumstances. Zacharias' speech is restored, and he utters the hymn of praise called the Benedictus. The narrative concerning John then concludes with the statement: "The child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel."

The birth of Jesus at Bethlehem is then accounted for by a decree of Augustus Cæsar which called for a census of the Empire, and which was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria. This compelled Joseph and Mary to go to Bethlehem, the city of David, inasmuch as Joseph was a descendant of David. There Jesus was born in a stable because there was no room in the inn. The joyful news of the birth was announced by an angel to some shepherds in an adjacent field, and they heard the celestial hosts chanting praises to God. The shepherds immediately seek and find the Child, and make known their strange experience. All wonder, "but Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart." After eight days the Child was circumcised, and the name Jesus was conferred. When the forty days of Purification had passed, Jesus was presented in the Temple, and the prescribed offering was made. There an aged and devout Jew, Simeon by name, and Anna, a prophetess, moved by the Holy Ghost, recognized in Jesus the fulfilment of their expectations. Then the parents return to their own city, Nazareth, where the child grew, and "waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him." (St. Lu. 1:5-2:40.)

The reader will have noticed that these are independent, yet not inconsistent accounts.

## APPENDIX M

### SOME EXPLANATIONS OF THE STORY OF THE VIRGIN BIRTH

THE objectors to the Biblical account of the Virgin Birth, however, usually represent the story as a legendary development, based in all probability upon some germ of truth or idea found in the genuine Gospel teaching. They say, for instance, that the Messiah was popularly supposed to be the Son or descendant of David, hence by reasoning, Bethlehem, the city of David, should be the Messiah's birthplace. Thus Bethlehem came to be the birthplace of Jesus. Again, Jesus was spoken of as the Son of God in an ethical sense. By development, this was transformed into a metaphysical sense: Jesus became Divine. Then as a Divine Being, of course He preexisted; and if pre-existent, when He entered into human life, He must be born of a Virgin. Thus with great ingenuity and plausibility the fact of the Virgin Birth is assaulted, and nothing is left but the noble manhood of Jesus; all but this is development and legend. A sufficient answer to this is that sufficient time for this development did not elapse between the death of Jesus and the appearance of these two Gospels—A. D. 60-80—especially when we remember that the accounts are based upon earlier narratives or tradition. This is even better seen when we notice how slowly the Christian consciousness grasped the significance of the Virgin Birth. This is apparent in the writings of the Ante Nicene Fathers. Spiritual insight, however, as well as radical criticism, must decide the issue, and its verdict is in favor of the Christian view.

Yet other objectors say that the idea of a Virgin Birth was not a feature of Jewish belief, but was borrowed from the Pagan World. There the origin of the ideas and the events, which have embellished the Christ tradition, is found. Numerous instances of belief in Divine generations and Virgin Births are cited. The star in St. Matthew's account is explained in



accordance with pagan superstition; the origin of the visit of the Wise Men is found in the journey of homage made by the Parthian King, Tiridates, with Magi in his train, to the Emperor Nero; the story of the Massacre of the Innocents, and its motive, are found in the narrative of Marathus concerning the birth of Augustus (Suet. Aug. 94); while the flight into Egypt is referred to mythological ideas. Thus St. Matthew's narrative is summarily disposed of, while his loose quotations from the Old Testament are designed as Jewish supports of Gentile Fables.

St. Luke's account is also said to be primarily the attempt of Jewish Christians to glorify the Infancy and the Childhood of Jesus by poetic fancies, which did not, however, at first esteem him the child of a Virgin Birth. Verses 34ff to this effect are said to have been added by some redactor who sought to harmonize Luke's account with that of Matthew, if possible. Then the features of the Presentation—the action of Simeon and Anna—are done away with; also the census of Cyrenius; also the story of the Shepherds. The words of the angels' song, indeed, are suggested by some Asiatic proclamations in regard to the birth of Augustus Cæsar; while Mary's journey to Elizabeth and Jesus' visit to the Temple are disposed of in a similar manner. All, in fact, become pious legends. That many of the facts brought forward by these objectors are true, every candid student will admit. His conclusion from the facts, however, will be different. That which seems, indeed, to the critic to disprove the Virgin Birth of Jesus, and its attendant circumstances, will to spiritual insight be the foregleams of eternal truths vouchsafed to a humanity in which Deity has ever been profoundly interested.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For able and elaborate statements of the views cited above, let the reader consult the Articles "Nativity," by Usener, and "Mary," by Schmiedel, in the *Encyclopædia Biblica*, and the little brochure, "The Birth of Jesus Christ," by Wilhelm Soltau, and also "The Virgin Birth of Christ," by Lobstein. The following objections to the story of the Virgin Birth have also been carefully considered by the writer, and although they appear formidable, and no doubt are convincing to many against the fact, he has been able to meet them, at least, to his own satisfaction. The first two chapters of St. Matthew and of St. Luke do not form part of the main body of the narrative, but are a later addition. The narratives are themselves contradictory and inconsistent in the following particulars:



(a) the genealogies record a different number of generations, and agree in only two names, (b) the scene of the Annunciation in St. Luke is unlike that in St. Matthew; (c) there is a double indication as to the abode of the parents; (d) the visit of the Magi, and the Flight into Egypt cannot be fitted into St. Luke's narrative either before or after the Presentation in the Temple. The narratives, too, when taken separately, "raise insuperable difficulties," some features even pointing to a mythical origin: the star of the Magi; the enrolment under Cyrenius; the origin of Matthew's story in an evident desire to give prophecy a literal fulfilment; the intervention of angels; the failure of contemporaneous writers to mention the massacre of the Innocents. St. Luke 2:50 is inexplicable if Mary knew of the supernatural birth; Mary's general attitude is also inexplicable (St. Mk. 3:20, 21). Passing from the Synoptic Gospels, there is no unequivocal reference to the Virgin Birth in the New Testament. Paul ignores the doctrine, neither using it as a proof of the sinlessness of Christ, nor of His Divinity. Twice, in fact, he seems to exclude the idea. (Rom. 1:3; Gal. 4:4.) St. Peter, in Acts 2:30, coincides with Paul. (See also Acts 13:23.) The silence of the Fourth Gospel concerning the Virgin Birth shows that the author "had found in the Logos theory a deeper explanation, and to his mind a better one, of the Divinity of Christ." The reader is referred to the able defenses of the Virgin Birth by the late Doctor James Orr and the Rev. Louis W. Sweet, entitled respectively, "The Virgin Birth of Christ" and "The Birth and Infancy of Jesus Christ."







